THE LIMITS OF DIFFERENCE:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONISM IN THE TOBACCO AND HAT INDUSTRIES (FRANCE, 1890-1914)

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis is based on the thorough examination of archival sources in relation to two industries in which women formed the majority of the workforce in France between 1890 and 1914. Its main aim is to establish a comparison between the tobacco and hat industries in relation to women's participation in their respective unions and federations. Subsidiary aims are to assess the way in which women perceived themselves, and were perceived, both as workers and as women, as well as to explore how female workers' involvement in unions related to the wider issues of female militancy and feminism. This thesis concentrates on four key aspects, namely women in industry, trade unions attitudes to women, the relationship between women and trade unionism and, finally, the relationship between women and strikes.

So far, general comparative studies have raised points but they have not been followed through nor supported by enough evidence to make them historically fully viable and no detailed case study has been undertaken in this field prior to 1914. In this context, the choice and comparison of the tobacco and hat industries are determining in at least three ways. First of all, no extensive research has been devoted to female workers in these two industries, let alone in their respective unions and federations. This makes the contribution of this thesis particularly valuable in the history of women in the labour movement. Secondly, women in general were in the minority in unions, which led to the assumption that they were reluctant to trade unionism. Yet, the fact that female tobacco workers were in the majority in their unions casts doubt on this traditional assumption. This makes this particular study of considerable significance in the understanding of the role of women as members and militants before the first world war. In addition, the fact that female tobacco workers were state workers makes it possible to assess the importance of the nature of industries and the working environment in determining female membership and militancy, which provides further evidence to support previous hypotheses.

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INTRODUCTION:

THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The present study is to compare and analyse the relationship between female workers and trade unionism in two different industries, namely the tobacco and hat industries, in France between 1890 and 1914. The interest of such an investigation in relation to what has already been done in the field of women and trade unionism is twofold: the labour movement as a whole has been approached by previous authors in a variety of ways, but major gaps remain, particularly in the realm of gender and case studies.

Firstly, while some aspects of feminism have resulted in the expansion of women's history, this has not been an even development. As shown below, an imbalance is particularly noticeable when considering the study of women in the French labour movement before 1914. On the one hand, the place to be given to women in socialist politics has been the topic of extensive and wide-ranging studies. On the other hand, although the attempts of the trade union movement to deal with the woman question were, by 1914, relatively encouraging, this question seems to have been comparatively neglected in the history of this movement. Women have long remained hidden from it, which gave rise to the belief that they did not exist or did not get involved in unions simply because they were not mentioned.

Secondly, the existing literature in the field of women in trade unions has not yet covered all the aspects essential to understand the differences existing from one industry to another, to qualify the general assumption made on women's lack of involvement in trade unionism as well as to assess women's ability to defend their rights as both women and workers in unions.

Before going further into the examination of the literature related to this topic, it seems important to say a few words about the place women had in the labour movement during the period under scrutiny, in order to get an idea of the general context of this study.

Women and the labour movement at the end of the nineteenth century

Since the late nineteenth century, numerous socialists, both male and female, have expressed their interest in the place women and feminism were to be given in their movement. August Bebel's Woman in the Past, Present and Future[1] in 1883 and Frederick Engels' The Origin of

[1] August Bebel, Woman in the Past, Present and Future, 1885, Reprint, London, Zwan Publications, 1988.

the Family, Private Property and the State[2] in 1884 contributed to establish the so called "woman question" as an issue to be debated within the socialist movement. To them women were the victims of a double exploitation; in society and in their family. The only way to free them would be in the suppression of the private ownership of the means of production and the end of capitalism. Therefore, the debate evolved around recurrent topics such as: whether women should be regarded as members of a class or of a sex, if not both; whether they should be organised separately; whether working class women should collaborate with bourgeois women to change their situation as women and whether priority should be given to the notion of gender or class in the struggle for the emancipation of women[3].

Marxist ideology penetrated slowly in France between 1880 and 1890. Marilyn Jacoby Boxer, Charles Sowerwine and Patricia Hilden, among others[4], have shown how the woman question was originally taken on board by French socialist groups such as the Guesdist *Parti Ouvrier Français*. At its founding congress in 1879, the latter called for complete equality between genders in public as well as in private life. In 1880, the programme of the party, written by Lafargue, Guesde[5] and Engels, made it clear that men and women should get equal wage for equal work. In the late 1890's Guesde still acknowledged that women had an economic and productive role to play but his original concern was to be progressively overtaken, as the

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[2] Friedrich Engels, L'Origine de la famille, de la propriété privée et de l'État, Paris, G. Carré, 1893.

[3] See for instance: Jane Slaughter, *"Feminism and Socialism: Theoretical Debates in Historical Perspective"*, Marxist Perspectives, 2 (3), 1979, p. 32.

[4] See in particular:

Marilyn Jacoby Boxer, Socialism Faces Feminism in France, 1879-1913, PhD, University of California, Riverside, 1975.

Marilyn Jacoby Boxer and Jean Quataert (eds.), Socialist Women: European Socialist Feminism in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries, New York, Elsevier, 1978.

Charles Sowerwine, Sisters or Citizens: Women and Socialism in France since 1876, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Charles Sowerwine and Claude Maignien, Madeleine Pelletier: une féministe dans l'arène politique, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1992.

Richard J. Evans, Comrades and Sisters: Feminism, Socialism and Pacifism in Europe, 1870-1945, Wheatsheaf, 1987.

Annie Gourdier, Le Socialisme et la femme de la Commune de 1871 à la fusion de 1905, Mémoire DES, Paris, 1969.

Hélène Henzely, Le Mouvement socialiste devant les problèmes féminins de 1899 à 1914, DES Histoire, Paris, 1957.

Patricia Hilden, Working Women and Socialist Politics in France, 1880-1914, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986.

Édith Thomas, Pauline Roland, socialisme et féminisme au XIX^{ème} siècle, Paris, Rivière, 1956.

[5] For further information on Lafargue and Guesde, see for instance:

Maïté Albistour and Daniel Armogathe, Histoire du féminisme français, Vol. 2., Paris, Édition des femmes, 1977, pp. 510-512.

result of the party's growing electoral and parliamentary ambitions. As women had no right to vote[6], socialists progressively lost interest in them.

It was also believed that women had to be educated first to be able to understand the real potential of the ballot box. Thus, the argument that women were still too much influenced by the Church was used on several occasions, in the *Sénat* for instance, to delay the adoption of the right to vote for women. In 1919 still, *Sénateur* Louis Martin, made this point quite clear:

> *"La femme à l'heure présente, n'a pas reçu encore une instruction civique suffisante, elle va en trop grand nombre à l'église subir la direction du prêtre pour que nous ne craignions pas que cette direction se prolonge hors de l'église jusqu'à la salle de vote pour décider la femme à jeter dans l'urne un bulletin contraire à la République."*[7]

This anticlerical argument was common amongst a good number of socialists. Even those who were in favour of the emancipation of women feared that giving them the right to vote would threaten the Republic by introducing the Church into the ballot box. Therefore, the general image of women as conservative and clerical was to be presented as one reason to prevent them from being associated with parliamentary socialism.

However, this failure to integrate women in the political sphere was not only due to male socialists paying little attention to non voters nor to anticlericals. Women too had a part to play. As opposed to English suffragettes, French feminists in France at the turn of the century did not regard the right to vote as an indispensable issue to emancipate women[8]. This right was often regarded as unhelpful. Furthermore, the old Guesdist argument according to which suffrage would not emancipate proletarian women since it had not emancipated proletarians was shared by some leading female syndicalists like Hélène Brion.

Another aspect to be considered is the place and role to be given to women in the social scene. The traditional nineteenth-century bourgeois role of women as housewives and mothers also prevailed amongst the majority of male socialists who remained faithful to the Proudhonian notion of womanhood[9]. This traditional role was not absent from feminist discourses either. This was partly explained by the decreasing birth rate of France in the Third Republic and the fact that the need to reverse this trend became a matter of national interest. Christine Bard[10]

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[6] For further details on the reasons why women were kept away from the political sphere, see in particular: Michelle Perrot, *"Les femmes et la citoyenneté en France"*, Les Femmes et la politique, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997.

[7] Jean Pascal, Les Femmes Députées de 1945 à 1988, Paris, Jean Pascal, 1990, p. 41.

[8] Marie-Hélène Zylbergerg-Hocquard, Femmes et féminisme dans le mouvement ouvrier français, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1981.

[9] For further details on Proudhon's views on women, see Chapter 2, p. 74-75.

[10] Christine Bard, *"Les féministes françaises et la natalité sous la Troisième République"*, paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France, held in

has shown how most feminist organisations remained attached to the notion of motherhood, thus revealing their inability to go beyond the dominant ideology. This attachment was also to be found amongst some socialist women, such as Aline Valette who worked in close collaboration with Guesde. Convinced that in a free society women would naturally choose maternity and motherhood as their primary goals, the latter created a kind of feminist socialism that did not threaten the paternalistic order of society[11].

The first real effort to organise socialist women came at the turn of the century, when two working-class women, Elisabeth Renaud and Louise Saumoneau founded a Socialist Feminist Group. Yet, the group had to face the lack of interest of the majority of male socialist leaders. The party came to refuse to admit the organisation in its ranks, and the Group progressively died during the period of socialist unification. Consequently, there was no women's organisation within the party between 1905 and 1912. A *Groupe des Femmes Socialistes* was eventually founded in 1913, but it never managed to survive independently from the party. Following Saumoneau's resolution, its members had to be party members first. This dependence was viewed as tactical, to avoid bourgeois feminists' influence within or on the Group, but it certainly prevented a good number of women from joining it in the sense that the party was mostly controlled and organised by and for men. Thus, by 1914, all concrete attempts to associate feminism with socialism had led to failure and disappointment. Although socialist politicians did not hesitate to make alliances with bourgeois parties to get access to government, they did not allow socialist women to make alliances with bourgeois feminists to get improvements for women.

As a whole, the synthesis between socialism and feminism failed first of all because of the class barrier. A gap grew between a kind of feminism which refused to associate the class struggle with the sex struggle and a socialist feminism to which these two struggles were linked. The irony is that although Marxist ideology claimed to free women from their exploitation, its introduction increased divisions amongst feminist groups, thus preventing or slowing down further improvements for women. In addition, the synthesis failed because both male dominated socialism and bourgeois dominated feminism were incapable of going beyond the male dominant bourgeois ideology. Only socialist feminists were likely to embody such a

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Newcastle upon Tyne, 7-9 September 1995.

[11] See in particular:

Maïté Albistour and Daniel Armogathe, op. cit., pp. 513-517, 529.

Marilyn Jacoby Boxer, *"Socialism Faces Feminism: the Failure of Synthesis in France, 1879-1914"*, Socialist Women, 1978, pp. 87-91.

Marcelle Capy, Aline Valette, Femmes et travail au dix-neuvième siècle, Paris, Syros, 1984, pp. 34-38.

synthesis but the majority of them too were entangled in ideological debates and unable to free themselves from them. As illustrated by Madeleine Pelletier's experience for instance, they eventually always had to choose one side, to the detriment of the other[12].

Socialism progressively divided and eventually formed two parallel, sometimes converging, sometimes diverging, movements. Trade unionism as a self-identified movement took form in 1895 when the National Confederation of Labour (CGT) was created. In response to the electoral orientation and extreme division of political socialism, the latter was to become an independent movement aiming at emancipating workers in the economic field. A priori, this new Confederation could have been regarded as more likely to take the woman question on board in the sense that, if women workers could not vote, at least they represented a substantial part of the workforce and could therefore be associated with the economic struggle. But in fact, despite the growing proportion of women in industry[13], the CGT was slow to consider the question in a positive way. As will be seen in the development of this study; male prejudices against women's participation in the public sphere remained strong. As late as 1898, the CGT national congress stated that its primary goal should be to eliminate women from the labour force and encourage them to return to the home. It is not until the early 1900's that a concrete effort was made towards women workers, encouraging male members to show more understanding of women's situation and women to join the movement. A *Comité d'Action Féministe Syndicaliste* was created in 1907. As a whole, it could be argued that the CGT's attempts were more encouraging than those of the socialists, as revealed in their respective membership rate: the proportion of women in workers' unions grew from 5.26% in 1900 to 9.81 % in 1911, whereas socialist membership was still over 95% male in 1914[14]. Yet, in 1914, the CGT remained entangled in its inability to deal with the growing gap existing between its male dominated ideology and the growing presence of women. This presence did generate an awareness of women's problems within unions, but it also generated more contradictions and tensions in the movement by introducing the problem faced by any institution having to deal with newcomers, that is to say the problem of integration versus

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[12] See in particular: Charles Sowerwine and Claude Maignien, op. cit.

[13] The proportion of women in the industrial workforce was 35.12% in 1896, 36.5% in 1901, 37.70% in 1906 and 38.15 % in 1911.
Source: Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, p. 14.

[14] Roger Magraw, A History of the French Working Class, Vol. 2: Workers and the Bourgeois Republic, New-York/Oxford, Blackwell, 1992, pp. 60-71.

assimilation. By deciding to try to assimilate women in its male dominated ranks, the CGT failed to identify a specifically feminine form of militancy, hence perpetuating a masculine vision of trade unionism and preventing women from identifying themselves as militants.

Review of the existing literature in the field

In a relatively recent article, Laura Levine Frader argued that research concentrating on women and the labour movement in the nineteenth century had been limited to two main perspectives; one studying the role of male and female workers in the development of French capitalism and the other one taking the division between public and private spheres for granted, until feminist historians showed that these two spheres actually interrelated in women's forms of action[15].

Given the considerable amount of studies on the subject, it would be as inappropriate as impractical to comment on them individually. The following is therefore a representative sample, carefully selected to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the existing literature in relation to the present investigation.

As a whole, the lack of strong interest in women in the French trade union movement before 1914 was to be reflected in its related literature. A vast amount of books are nationally orientated and give a general account of the evolution of the movement over a long period of time[16]. Even when examining the pre-war period, and the CGT in particular, these studies

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[15] Laura Levine Frader, *"Femmes, genre et mouvement ouvrier en France aux XIX^ème et XX^ème siècles: bilan et perspectives de recherches"*, Clio: Histoire, femmes et sociétés, 3, 1996, pp. 223-244.

[16] See in particular:

Henri Aigueperse, Cent ans de syndicalisme: le mouvement syndical en France de la Première Internationale à 1970, Paris, Martinsart, 1977.

Michel Branciard and Marcel Gonin, Le Mouvement ouvrier, 1815-1976, Paris, Montholon Service, 1977.

Jean Bron, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français, Vol. 2: La Contestation du capitalisme par les travailleurs organisés (1884-1950), Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1975.

Jean Bruhat, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français, Paris, Éditions Sociales, 1952.

Jean Bruhat and Marc Piolot, Esquisse d'une histoire de la CGT (1895- 1965), Paris, CGT, 1959.

Benigno Caceres, Le Mouvement ouvrier, Paris, Seuil, 1967.

Michel Dreyfus, Histoire de la CGT, Paris, Complexe, 1995.

René Garmy, Histoire du mouvement syndical en France, Vol. 1: Des origines à 1914, Paris, Bureau d'Éditions, 1933.

Ernest Labrousse, Le Mouvement ouvrier et les idées sociales en France, Paris, Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1948.

George Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme en France, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1981.

Val Rogin Lorwin, The French Labor Movement, Harvard University Press/ Oxford University Press, 1954.

André Marchal, Le Mouvement syndical en France, Paris, Bourrelier, 1945.

Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France des origines à nos jours, Paris, Aubier/ Montaigne, 1946.

Jean Montreuil, Le Mouvement syndical sous la Troisième République, Paris, Payot, 1967.

René Mouriaux, La CGT, Paris, Seuil, 1982.

concentrate on the summit and the official policy to the detriment of grass roots' participation and the way this policy was perceived and implemented by the individuals who had to deal with it. Women have long remained absent from this kind of general approach for two main reasons: they rarely had responsibilities at the summit of the trade union hierarchy and the woman question was regarded as secondary in the struggle to emancipate workers and too specific to be included in a general history. But this led to the domination of a masculine vision of the trade union movement and to a misunderstanding of women's role in it. Because they were hardly mentioned or studied, the assumption that they were inactive and too passive to defend their rights was easily made.

This general assumption was challenged in the late 1960's thanks to the growing concern for women's history. Some researchers (mainly women) then devoted their works to the specific history of women in the trade union movement. The pioneer in this field was Madeleine Guilbert in her study on women workers and trade unionism before 1914[17]. She was the first to reveal differences in women's participation depending on several factors, such as industries, environments and events. After her, others[18], like Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard and Slava Liszek went deeper into these differences, creating new perspectives to approach and explain the low level of participation of working-class women in trade unionism. This lack of involvement was then described as much as the result of specific impediments, including those created by male union leaders, as the result of women's supposed docility. These studies contributed to give women a voice and to create a women's history of the movement. There were thus two existing parallel histories. It is only in recent years that both histories have been associated, leading the way to general studies integrating women[19].

Auguste Pawlowski, La Confédération Générale du Travail, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1910.
Michel Ragon, Ils ont semé nos libertés: cent ans de droits syndicaux, Paris, Syros, 1984.
Peter N. Stearns, Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labour: A Cause Without Rebels, New Brunswick, Rutgarn University Press, 1971.
Georges Vidalenc, La Classe ouvrière et le syndicalisme en France de 1789 à 1965, Paris, Confédération Force Ouvrière, 1969.
Claude Willard, La France ouvrière: histoire de la classe ouvrière et du mouvement ouvrier français, Vol. 1, Paris, Éditions Sociales, 1993.

[17] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit.

[18] See:
Madeleine Colin, Ce n'est pas d'aujourd'hui: femmes, syndicats, luttes de classes, Paris, Éditions Sociales, 1975.
Margaret Maruani, Les Syndicats à l'épreuve du féminisme, Paris, Syros, 1979.
Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France avant 1914, Paris, Anthropos, 1978.
Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Femmes et féminisme dans le mouvement ouvrier français, op. cit.

[19] See, in particular, Roger Magraw, op. cit.

In addition to general studies, the trade union movement has been approached in specific ways. Some studies deal with a single location[20], others have been more concerned with a national federation in particular[21]. When undertaken, such studies often refer to the general evolution of the federation, and women are rarely their main concern. A few researchers (mainly women again) have tried to compensate for this deficiency, but their studies rarely start before 1914 or rarely deal with women *factory* workers[22]. Only two studies on women at a federative level have been traced: Françoise Blum's study of women in the garment workers' federation[23], and Claude Magnien's research on women in the printers' federation[24].

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[20] See:
Françoise Dondey-Gilles, Les Femmes en grève dans la région lyonnaise (1890-1914): analyse quantitative des mouvements et de leurs fluctuations, Thèse de doctorat, Lyon II, 1988.
Laura Levine Frader, Peasants and Protest: Agricultural Workers, Politics, and Unions in the Aude, 1850-1914, Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ Oxford, University of California Press, 1991.
Michael Hanagan, The Logic of Solidarity: Artisans and Industrial Workers in Three French Towns, 1871-1914, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1980.
Yves Lequin, Les Ouvriers de la région lyonnaise (1848-1914), Lyon, Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1977.
John Merriman, Red City: Limoges in the Nineteenth Century, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986.
Donald Reid, The Miners of Decazeville, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1985.
Guy Rousseau, Les Mouvements ouvriers dans le Puy-de-Dôme (1871- 1914), Thèse de troisième cycle, Université de Clermont II, Clermont-Ferrand, 1982.
Joan Scott, The Glassmakers of Carmaux, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1974.
Rolande Trempé, Les Mineurs de Carmaux, 1848-1914, 2 vols., Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1971.

[21] See:
François Bernard and Louis Bouet et al., Le Syndicalisme dans l'enseignement, histoire de la Fédération de l'Enseignement, des origines à l'unification de 1935, Grenoble, Institut d'Études Politiques de Grenoble, 1966.
Paul Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du Livre et du Journal: la Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1971.
Roger Dombret, La Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, 1881-1966, 85 ans de vie et de luttes, des faits, des dates, Paris, FFTL, 1966.
Maurice Dommanget, Le Syndicalisme dans la Fédération de l'Enseignement, 4 vols., Grenoble, Institut d'Études Politiques, 1968.
Max Ferré, Histoire du mouvement syndicaliste révolutionnaire chez les instituteurs, des origines à 1922, Paris, 1955.
Georges Frischmann, Histoire de la Fédération CGT des PTT, Paris, Éditions sociales, 1967.
Feeley McCollum, Rebels with Causes. A study of Revolutionary Syndicalist Culture among the French Primary School Teachers between 1880 and 1919, New York, Peter Lang, 1989.
Madeleine Rébérioux, Les Ouvriers du Livre et leur Fédération, un centenaire 1881-1981, Paris, Temps Actuels, 1981.
Jean Vial, La Coutume chapelière. Histoire du mouvement ouvrier dans la chapellerie, Paris, Domat-Montchrétien, 1941.

[22] See:
Persis Charles Hunt, Revolutionary Syndicalism and Feminism Among Teachers in France, 1900-1921, PhD, Tufts University, 1975.
Anne-Marie Sohn, Féminisme et syndicalisme, les institutrices de la Fédération Unitaire de l'Enseignement, de 1919 à 1935, Paris, Audun/ Hachette, 1973.
Madeleine Vignes, Le Journal des dames: féminisme, syndicalisme dans les PTT de 1924 à 1937, Paris, 1992.

[23] Françoise Blum, Féminisme et syndicalisme: les femmes dans la Fédération de l'Habillement, Mémoire de Maîtrise, Paris I, Paris, 1978.

[24] Claude Magnien's research topic is related to female printers in France from the 1830's to the 1970's. The second part of her study deals with the relationship between women, the printers' federation and the CGT between 1881 and 1913.

As a whole, it could be argued that the history of women in trade unionism is making slow progress in three different ways. Firstly, the number of studies made since Madeleine Guilbert's pioneering work, and the number of researchers devoted to this issue, indicate a quantitative deficiency. Secondly, in terms of gender, it is clear that the divisions studied in this aspect of social history are reflected in the gender of those who study it. As shown during a conference on women and trade unionism in Paris in January 1996[25], this topic seems to be the prerogative of a limited circle of female researchers: the first question to be asked to the only male to present a paper was: "how can a man come to study such a topic?". In this context, the present research is no exception. Lastly, in terms of perspective, the federative approach has still not been used to its full potential in so far as some federations have not yet been studied in depth. Furthermore, in their analysis of women in trade union organisations, Madeleine Guilbert and Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard led the way to comparative research in the field, but their works still need to be completed through more specific studies. Whereas the former lacks federative references, the latter deals with any kind of union.

Justification and definition of the research

The interest of the present study is not only related to the gap to be found in the existing literature in the field, but also in its actual approach and the federations selected. As a whole this investigation is related to the existing literature in two different ways. It has a national and general dimension in the sense that it takes into account the general evolution of the trade union movement and that of the tobacco workers' and hatters' federations and unions. But the study of women in these federations also means that a more specific approach is necessary. Therefore, the investigation intermingles a study from the top down with a study from the bottom up.

It also gives a new perspective to the study of women within the trade union movement by associating a federative approach with a comparative approach. A detailed comparative approach of female workers in two different federations has indeed never been undertaken, although it appears to be one of the best ways to qualify and explain the differences in women's participation. Studying only one federation at a time is a good way to assess women's participation in it, but it cannot in itself prove anything if not faced with differing

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[25] *"Syndicalisation des femmes, discours et pratiques"*, day conference organised by the group *Syndicalisation*, Paris, La Sorbonne, 27 January 1996.

situations. The study of trade unionism has shown that it is as easy as dangerous to make a general rule out of a few specific examples.

The choice of the tobacco and hat industries was determined by several factors. The review of the existing literature has revealed two important gaps. Firstly, the tobacco workers' federation has apparently never been studied in detail. In the early 1900's, an engineer working for the state in one of the factories published a survey on tobacco workers[26]. Although crucial in the understanding of the tobacco workers' work and working conditions, his study dealt with various aspects of the industry. Only one chapter was devoted to unions and their members. In 1990, Slava Liszek published a general history of the federation from its creation to the 1990's, but only one chapter is devoted to the period prior to 1914[27]. Secondly, the study of women in both the tobacco workers' and the hatters' federations before 1914 has never been undertaken. Jean Vial published a general history of the hatters' federation, but he hardly mentioned women in his work[28].

The two federations were not too different to permit a sound argumentation and comparison, but different enough to demonstrate the ambiguity of the woman question in trade unionism. The originality of women tobacco workers in trade union matters was noticeable from the beginning of the unionisation of tobacco workers[29]. Contemporary observers could not help praising their activity and class awareness. Their originality was also noticed and commented on by researchers like Madeleine Guilbert, Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard and Slava Liszek, who showed their exceptional characteristics, both in terms of quantity and quality[30]. Not only did the tobacco industry employ a majority of women, but these women were numerous and relatively active in their unions. The federation immediately acknowledged their equal status within trade unionism. As a result, women were largely represented at meetings

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[26] Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État (Tabacs et allumettes), Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902.

[27] Slava Liszek, Cent ans tout feu tout flamme, Paris, Fédération CGT Tabacs et Allumettes, 1990.

[28] Jean Vial, La Coutume chapelière, op. cit..

[29] See in particular:
Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1899, pp. 603-628.
Marie Bonnevial, *"Le mouvement syndical féminin en France"*, Revue de morale sociale, September 1901, p. 265.
Caroline Milhaud, L'Ouvrière en France, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1907, p. 100.
Georges Renard, *"Les femmes et le syndicat"*, La Grande revue, 24, 25 December 1910, p. 752.

[30] See:
Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp. 93-100, 186-201.
Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France avant 1914, Thèse de troisième cycle, Tours, 1973, pp. 229-233.
Slava Liszek, op. cit., pp. 21-43.

and congresses. Their original features were reinforced by the fact that tobacco workers were state workers. Since the state wanted to present itself as a model employer, these workers benefited from relatively good working conditions, social welfare, and better pay than average. Their case is a good basis of comparison in the sense that it offers the possibility of assessing the link between their specific status and their militancy. It also challenges the general assumption made on women's passivity in trade union matters.

In order to respect the logic of the comparison to be established, the choice of the hatters' federation was made according to certain characteristics. In terms of class, it was not too different from the tobacco workers' federation in the sense that it was also a federation of workers. Yet, it was different enough to justify the comparison in two ways. Firstly, hatters belonged to the private sector of industry. This gives a new perspective to the research, since no comparison between state women workers and women working for private industry has yet been undertaken. This makes it possible to assess the different impact of both sectors on working women, and to examine the role of the state as the ideal employer. Secondly, female hatters were not as well represented in their unions. Although women were also in a majority in the hat industry and the federation welcome them in theory, they tended to remain outside the trade union world. Their participation in meetings and congresses was rare, if not non-existent. This does not mean that they never got involved in debates and strikes, but the latter were generally dominated by men, which often made women followers rather than leaders. As this vision corresponds more to the general assumption made on women's participation, it makes female hatters a good case to be compared with female tobacco workers.

The choice of these two federations defined in itself the limits of the period of time to be studied. The hatters' federation was created in 1870, the tobacco workers' federation in 1890. The later year was therefore selected as the starting point. The year 1914 was chosen as an end for two main reasons. Firstly, the first world war imposed new priorities on trade unions' agenda[31]. Secondly, the image of women workers was altered as a consequence of their massive appearance on the job market to replace requisitioned men[32]. Whether this alteration changed the long term vision of female militancy in male militants' mind is far from being certain. However, it is likely to have momentarily changed the parameters according to which

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[31] By this time both federations belonged to the CGT.

[32] Yvonne Delatour, *"Le travail des femmes pendant la première guerre mondiale et ses conséquences sur l'évolution de leur rôle dans la société"*, Francia, 2, 1974, pp. 482-501.

the relationship between men and women in unions was established, and would therefore deserved particular, separate attention.

Primary sources and methodology

The remaining gaps in the existing literature can only justify the need for more research in the field. Yet, it must be borne in mind that this research, as well as the method to be applied, were dependent upon impediments common to any socio-historical study. The key comment made by Laura Levine Frader, in her previously mentioned article, was that social historians in the field gave priority to the history of women rather than that of the relationship between men and women[33]. In this connection, this study attempts to fill this gap, and offers, when possible, both sides of the story, that is to say men's and women's points of view, but only to a certain extent. Researching for the present study showed, as is often the case, that there is a difference to be made between what remains to be done and what can be done. It is true that the woman question cannot be studied in any given environment without referring to its social background, but it cannot be studied without sources either, even if these sources give information on women not necessarily as they were, but as they should be or as they were perceived in society. This is why the social history of women, like any aspect of social history, can only reflect a certain aspect of reality, in turn dictated by sources and the ideology they conveyed.

This point is particularly important when studying women in unions. The topic interferes in two different areas of social history: the history of the labour movement and the history of women. The existence of the Marguerite Durand library in Paris shows that feminism has left many traces from this period[34]. Yet, as shown by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard in her study on the relationship between feminism and trade unionism, feminism as a movement did not really influence female factory workers before 1914. Consequently, feminist sources proved to be rather limited for the study of specific unions and federations. For this reason, the main archives and documents used for this investigation are from two main origins; trade unions and official sources. Works published by individuals during the period under scrutiny were used for complementary information[35].

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[33] Laura Levine Frader, *"Femmes, genres et mouvement ouvrier en France"*, op. cit., p. 224.

[34] See in particular:
Laurence Klejman, Florence Rochefort, *"Lieux et domaines de la recherche: sources pour l'histoire du féminisme"*, Bulletin de l'Institut du Temps Présent, 34, 1988, pp. 18-24.

[35] See the bibliography for further details or references. Complementary archives have been included in the bibliography, but their number, various nature and origins have prevented them from being inserted in this

Although documents and archives available on the trade union movement before 1914 cover a wide range of aspects, researchers on the labour movement have always had to share common impediments[36]. For instance, researching on specific federations is not an easy task in itself, in so far as unions have not always kept their archives and, if they did, the selection was often made according to their own criteria. In addition, there are a considerable variety of incidents trade union archives can suffer. For instance, when searching for archives on tobacco workers in their federation, the present CGT federation claimed that the present FO-federation was responsible for the archives related to the pre-1945 period. The FO-federation in its turn was sorry to admit that, due to a removal to smaller premises, most of its old archives were destroyed a few years ago.

For those researching on women in the labour movement, sources can be particularly hard to find and misleading because of the fact that trade unionism has remained dominated by men. This has had at least two main consequences. Firstly, it must be envisaged that it has influenced the way archives have been kept in the sense that, as women were in the minority, they, and the documents related to them, were probably not regarded as a priority. Hence the difficulty to find archives directly related to women. Secondly, women workers were not given a voice as often as men. As they did not have many opportunities to express their concerns about their status, their life, their work or their working conditions, it is very difficult to find any document expressing their own views. This absence could also be interpreted as the illustration of their lack of interest and care, but it could as well be regarded as the sign that they regarded neither of the two perspectives offered to them, trade unionism and feminism, as appropriate to their conditions as women workers. This is why the lack of women workers' interventions in sources must be taken into account in the analysis of these sources. Silence itself must be interpreted.

Because women lacked opportunities to express themselves, the vast majority of texts referring to them were actually written by men. In this connection, the CGT congress reports

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general presentation.

[36] For instance, the archives of the SEITA (Society for the Industrial Exploitation of Tobacco and Matches) are kept preciously by the Society, but cannot be consulted by researchers from outside.
For further details on usual problems faced by researchers in the labour movement in France, see in particular:
Annie Kriegel, Rémie Gossez and Jacques Rougerie, *"Sources et méthodes pour une histoire sociale de la classe ouvrière"*, Le Mouvement social, 40, July-September 1962, pp. 1-18.
Michelle Perrot, *"Le problème des sources dans l'étude du mouvement ouvrier"*, Le Mouvement social, 33, 1960, pp. 21-34.
Michelle Perrot, Jean Maitron, *"Sources, institutions et recherches en histoire ouvrière française"*, Le Mouvement social, 65, October-December 1968, pp. 121-161.

were a typical example. A corpus of 16 national and CGT congress reports[37] were used as a starting point to examine the position of the tobacco workers' and hatters' federations within the labour movement, as well as to compare the confederation policy towards women with the way the tobacco workers' and hatters' federations dealt with it[38]. The same procedure was followed for each report to be analysed; the first two steps being to identify the delegates of both federations and the themes on which they intervened. Three different aspects were thus given priority when reading these reports: anything regarding tobacco workers, from the number and gender of their delegates[39] to the contents of any of their interventions; anything related to hatters and their federation, and anything related to women.

These reports must be regarded as what they were, that is to say a summary of what had been discussed and done during the congresses. Some were more detailed than others, which could cause an imbalance in the meaning or interpretation of the debate: a question reported briefly does not necessarily mean that it was less interesting or debated. It could, for instance, mean that the reporter was not directly concerned with the debate or did not belong to the commission which had to deal with the question. This seems particularly important when considering the woman question[40]: because these reports were written by men, they did not necessarily emphasise what would have been emphasised by a woman. Furthermore, in several cases the debates did not take place in plenary sessions, but in commissions. In such instances, the report only showed the report of the commission followed by a brief summary of the discussion. In a couple of cases the reporter noted the intervention of women, without giving any detail about the contents of their interventions. It could be added that in brief reports the presence or the brief intervention of a woman could be omitted in the final report for its lack of importance in relation to the general contents. Therefore, the fact that the interventions of women were rather rare in these reports did not necessarily imply that they did not intervene at all, it could also mean that their intervention was regarded as not worth being put in a report.

In addition to workers' national congresses, federative congress reports[41] were used to analyse any kind of information related to the research topic. Priority was given to the following

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[37] See bibliography for a detailed list of these primary sources.

[38] Priority was given to this second aspect since Madeleine Guilbert had already analysed in details the relationship between women and the CGT.

[39] It was impossible to determine the name and gender of the delegates at the 1895 congress, the list of members being separated from the list of unions and federations represented.

[40] The expression "woman question', in this case, must be understood in a very broad sense, that is to say anything relating to women in particular, such as the problems caused by their presence in industry and the place to be given to them in society.

[41] See bibliography for the list of federative congress reports that were consulted.

aspects: the quantitative representation of women, the characteristics and working conditions of women in both industries; the differences between a state and a private industry; the policy of both federations towards women; women's needs and expectations, women's participation in the federative life; women workers in strikes and the relationship between male workers, female workers and feminist ideas.

The congress reports of the tobacco workers' federation proved a mine of information related to the topic, at least until 1894. No report as such was published between 1895 and 1910, as the congress summaries were incorporated into the federative paper. The congress reports after 1910 were not found, but a systematic search was made in the socialist paper L'Humanité which published a summary every year. In addition, a comment on these missing reports was made by Madeleine Guilbert who was lucky enough to be able to consult them when researching about 30 years ago[42]. Congress reports of the hatters' federation were published separately. The full collection, numbering ten reports from 1890 to 1914, was examined following the same aspects as mentioned above[43].

The federative papers of the two federations were also examined very closely. The tobacco workers' federative paper, L'Écho des tabacs, was published monthly from September 1895 onwards. It generally included an editorial article, one or two reports on the various Central Committee meetings, articles on the activities of this Committee, news from local unions and the summary of the sessions of the previous congress, at least until the 1910 congress when it was decided that congress reports would be published separately. The examination concentrated on the first issue to the April 1914 issue. Although a few issues for the period under scrutiny were missing[44], it was possible to undertake systematic research in relation to the following aspects: working conditions and other issues related to work, such as wages and working hours; activities of the federation and local unions, including their general history and policy, membership and claims; women in general; responsibilities given to women in local unions and the federation; women in strikes and articles written by women.

The hatters' paper, L'Ouvrier chapelier, was published every two weeks, then on a monthly basis from the end of 1898 onwards. Its general structure was not very different from L'Écho des tabacs, although its tendency was more radical and its contents more orientated towards

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[42] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit. , pp. 96-99.

[43] See the list of these reports in the bibliography.

[44] The following issues of L'Écho des tabacs were missing at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*: January and February 1896; September 1898; May 1901; May 1902; all 1904 issues; January 1906; May 1909; September 1911; November and December 1913.

socialist politics. The analysis was made from the January 1890 issue to the August 1914 issue. Although a few issues were again missing[45], the same kind of examination as for L'Écho des tabacs was undertaken for the hat industry, keeping the same aspects as mentioned above.

Due to the growing concern for social reforms, numerous social enquiries were performed by the government or official organisations during the nineteenth century. Some of them targeted women workers in particular[46]. No official publications as such were made available regarding the tobacco and hat industries in particular. Yet, some governmental sources, especially those published by the *Office du travail*[47] proved particularly useful in establishing numerical comparisons between the two industries and federations, especially in connection with the number of workers in both industries, wages, working hours and union memberships[48].

The 1896, 1901, 1906 and 1911 censuses were mainly used for Chapter 1. They were very helpful in giving the principal characteristics of industries such as the number of workers employed, the number of women employed and the size of businesses. However, a detailed comparison between these censuses proved to be pointless in so far as the data were classified differently from one year to another. The 1891 census proved to be of no use for the present study. The figures given were too general, as a result of which it was impossible to establish the number of women working in particular industries. This census also gave the number of employers, manual workers and clerical workers separately, whereas the working population was divided into only two categories, employers and workers, in the following censuses.

From 1896 to 1906, the data regarding the working population was collected taking the working place as a starting point, whereas the 1911 census was performed in relation to the place where people lived. Any group of persons working together in any determined place, on a permanent basis was classified as a business. Any individual working on his/her own, under no supervision, was also regarded as a business. Unemployed people were classified separately. Any piece worker working from home was classified within the employer category.

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[45] The following issues of L'Ouvrier chapelier were missing at the *Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale*: 29 January 1893; 16 July 1893; 18 April 1897; 9 October 1898; March 1899; June 1905; August 1905; December-January 1907-08; November 1912.

[46] See all the enquiries led by the *Office du travail*, in particular:

Enquête sur le travail à domicile dans l'industrie de la lingerie, 5 vols., Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1907-1911.

Enquête sur le travail à domicile dans l'industrie de la fleur artificielle, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1913.

Enquête sur le travail à domicile dans l'industrie de la chaussure, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1914.

[47] The *Office du travail* was created in 1891. It became the *Direction du travail* in 1899 and was eventually included in the *Ministère du travail* in 1906.

[48] See the list of these publications in the bibliography.

As for the 1896 census, it was possible to establish the number of workers in both industries on a national level. A detailed list for every *"arrondissement"* was also given, but proved of no use for the present study because the category *"Fabrication de chapellerie"* also included the making of felt shoes and sandals, artificial flowers and other industries not directly related to the hat industry. Furthermore, tobacco factories were included in the category of state industries. So, it was impossible to extract figures related only to tobacco workers. However, the departmental list was more useful since it gave details of the hat industry in particular. Only the following workers and trades were taken into consideration in this list: the making of felt, silk and plush hats; hatters (when no further detail was given); finishers and felt hat dyers; the making of kepis and caps; the making of fashionable items; fashion designers; the making of straw hats; straw hat finishing; hat garnishing; silk hat cover sewers. The categories "making of fashionable items" and " fashion designers" were merged in the national list.

In 1901, the following were included in the hat industry: Felt, silk, plush and woollen hat manufacture (including the making of felt, silk, plush hats; hatters; hat shapers; hat cutters; finishers and felt hat dyers; the making of kepis, and various caps); fashion (including the making of fashionable items; fashion designers and the making of hat garnishing); straw hat industry (including the making of straw hats and straw hat finishing). Because of the different way results were reported in 1901, compared to 1896, it was impossible to compare figures given in 1896 with those given in 1901. In 1906, the census was performed following the same method as in 1901. Only the national data proved useful since the departmental data were not detailed enough[49]. Compared to the 1906 census, the 1911 departmental list gave more details, at least on the hat industry, but the tobacco industry was not taken into consideration. The hat industry was divided only into two categories: hatters and milliners.

Most of the quantitative data given in Chapters 2 and 3 was extracted from the Annuaires des syndicats, published annually by the *Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie* from 1890 onwards, although the 1906, 1907 and 1913 directories could not be traced. This series of directories was used in order to estimate the union membership in tobacco workers' and hatters' unions. The search was made on four different organisations: tobacco workers, hatters, cap makers and milliners, since the last three were progressively included in the same federation[50].

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[49] The tobacco industry was included in the category of state industries and the hat industry in the category of *"travaux des étoffes"*.

[50] The first cap makers' union appeared in the 1897 directory. The first milliners' union was created in 1902. By 1903, the latter was composed of 29 members, including 28 women (96.55%). It disappeared a year later,

These directories usually gave a departmental list of unions registered according to the 1884 law legalising unions. Yet, when dealing with official publications in relation to trade unionism, it must be borne in mind that before 1914, the relationship between the state and workers' trade unions was often chaotic. Even after 1884, numerous unions refused to register because they disagreed with the conditions imposed by the law. In general, unions appeared reluctant to reveal too much about their activity to official inquiries by fear of reprisal, which led to a noticeable disproportion between data given in official sources (it was in the government interest to underestimate the influence of trade unionism) and data given in union sources (it was in their interest to overestimate their influence in the working population). Such was the case for some hatters' unions: they were indicated as being part of the federation in L'Ouvrier chapelier, but could not be found in the departmental list of the Annuaires. It seems less probable that such could be the case for tobacco workers in so far as they worked for the state and the latter would probably not have tolerated nor accepted a union which would not have been legalised. All the unions mentioned as being in the federation of tobacco workers figured in the departmental list.

As a whole, the tables or figures established according to the data given in these directories must be taken as nothing but an estimation. Many anomalies were noticed[51], which indubitably makes the results incomplete, but these results remain useful to give an idea of the position of women in the industries studied. Furthermore, the directories made a difference between employers', workers' and agricultural unions, but did not divide workers' unions into "Red" and "Yellow" unions[52]. This distinction was made possible in some cases, especially in the

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after being included in the main Parisian hatters' union.

[51] For tobacco workers' unions the main anomalies observed were as follows:
First of all, one union (*"Syndicat des ouvriers de construction mécanique et d'entretien des manufactures des tabacs"*) was mentioned for several years, without any information about it. It was excluded from the evaluation.
Secondly, in 2 cases, one in 1900 and the other in 1905, the data given for one union indicated that this union contained only women. Not only did it not contain any the previous or following years, but also the number given seemed comparatively odd. Therefore, the figures given for 1900 and 1905 must be understood as a maximum.
Thirdly, in one case, in 1911, the number of women in the mixed union in Riom seems to have been underestimated compared to the other years; it was indicated as having 415 members including 60 women, which would mean that this union would have contained 355 men. Such figures seem hard to believe considering the average proportion of women in this union, and the average number of men workers in this industry. Therefore, the number and proportion of women in 1911 are probably underestimated too.
The anomalies noticed for hatters' unions were less numerous, but the number of members was omitted in many cases, especially in 1890 and 1891. Therefore, the figures regarding the hatters must be taken as a minimum. Furthermore, at least 3 unions were mentioned without any information about them; so they had to be ignored in the evaluation.

[52] Red unions were independently run by workers and were based on a class division, whereas yellow unions

tobacco industry, thanks to the unions' title. From 1900 onwards, the directories also mentioned the number of women in unions, which was particularly useful for the present study. They also gave the number of national federations with the number of their members, but never included the number of women in these federations. It was impossible to estimate this number, except for the federation of hatters between 1900 and 1903, because the directories did not regularly indicate the unions belonging to these federations.

Official statistics on strikes[53] were used for Chapter 4 in order to assess women's participation in labour conflicts. The Statistique des grèves was published by the *Ministère du commerce* from 1890 onwards. The *Office du travail* took charge of them after its creation in 1891. The Statistique became an annual publication in 1892[54]. The format of this publication was the same every year. Firstly, it included details of all the strikes occurring in the year, stating the location, the dates, the number of strikers, the claims and the final outcome. Businesses were listed according to the industry and branch to which they belonged. It is not until 1893 that strikers were divided into male, female and children strikers. Consequently, figures before that year will not be used in this study. However, each volume also included recapitulative tables and further details on the year's most important strikes. Information on women in these strikes was sometimes given, which proved very useful for the present study.

From 1892 onwards, these statistics were established according to questionnaires sent to *préfets*. Unfortunately, it was proved that not all the strikes were reported, especially short ones or those involving only a small number of workers[55]. In the case of the hat industry, a good number of strikes reported in L'Ouvrier chapelier or La Voix du peuple were not found in the Statistiques, such as the hatters' strike in Toulouse in the Bert and Co manufacture in 1896[56], the one in Moulin in February 1898[57], in Vienne in January 1899[58], in Toulouse in May[59] and June-July 1910[60] or the one in Paris in August 1911[61]. The hatters' federation

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were usually run in close collaboration with employers, if not by employers themselves.

[53] Office du travail, Statistique des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage (1890-1913), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1890-1913.

[54] The first statistics to be published included 1890 and 1891.

[55] This caused great concern amongst officials from the *Office*. In 1905, a note was sent to *préfets* by the *Ministre du commerce* reproaching them for not taking these questionnaires seriously enough and advising them to consider all the strikes, even the short ones or those including a small number of strikers.

[56] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 31 May 1896, p. 1.

[57] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 20 February 1898, p. 1.

[58] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 January 1899, p. 1.

[59] L'Ouvrier chapelier, April-May 1910, p. 2.

[60] *"Les chapeliers de Toulouse"*, La Voix du peuple, 3 July 1910, p. 3.

[61] *"Les chapeliers de Paris"*, La Voix du peuple, 20 August 1911, p. 3.

officially stated that 39 strikes occurred between July 1909 and May 1912, whereas only 29 were reported in the Statistiques des grèves for the same period[62]. To a lesser extent, the same deficiency was noticed in the tobacco industry. For instance, a strike involving only 70 female cigar makers occurred in Le Mans in January 1905, but did not appear in the Statistique[63]. So, all the figures taken from this document must be taken as a minimum.

After having noted and classified the strikes occurring in the two selected industries according to the Statistiques, a systematic search was made in the BB18 series (police reports) at the *Archives Nationales*, as well as in La Voix du peuple, to find and analyse articles on these strikes, giving priority to strikes in which women workers were involved[64].

Difference put in perspective: organisation of the study

It goes without saying that difference is to be the starting point when studying women in relation to an acknowledged male environment because this gives its justification to any study on women as such: what would be the point in concentrating on women if they were not thought different from men from the start? Yet, the term "difference" in the context of the present investigation goes much further than the difference in gender since the main purpose is to compare female militancy in two different industries.

Any comparison as such implies having similar information about the two elements to be compared, which is not the case for the present study. On the one hand, more information was gathered on women tobacco workers, as the direct consequence of their greater representation in unions. On the other hand, the relationship between women hatters and their unions raised problems and questions which were not to be found in the case of tobacco workers. Therefore, some aspects of the investigation could not be covered equally, which often made the comparison unequal .

However, such an imbalance must be regarded more as the outcome of a difference in environment as the reflection of a fundamental difference in feminine characteristics from one industry to another. All working women shared some common features and characteristics. As a common entity, it is not their womanhood as such which changed according to their environment but the external representation and expression of their womanhood. The notion of environment is therefore crucial. One of the aims of this study is to determine the factors

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[62] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française,*"Grèves et lock-out"*, Rapports de la Fédération. Compte rendu moral et financier (juillet 1909-Juillet 1912), Paris, Imprimerie La Productrice, 1912, pp 7- 17.
[63] *"Grèves d'ouvrières des tabacs, au Mans"*, L'Humanité, Friday 13 January 1905, p. 3.
[64] See the list of archives and articles included in the bibliography.

which could explain the difference in the representation of women in the tobacco workers' and hatters' unions. Therefore, it is considered important to compare first the working environment of these workers to see if it could contribute to create such a difference. This is why the first chapter of the investigation concentrates on the characteristics of both industries, in relation to the industrial environment of the period. It is based on a comparison of the nature of the two industries and that of their workforce. Its aim is to show how different these industries were, to situate the place of women in these industries and subsequently to identify key factors to be put in relation to the representation of women in unions. In other words, it tries to answer the following key questions: what were the characteristics of both industries and how could these characteristics influence the way women were represented in unions? As will be seen, they played a major role in women's participation.

The trade union environment is considered as another key element in the understanding of women behaviour in relation to trade unionism. The purpose of the second chapter is to establish a link between the characteristics of unions and their perception of women in order to determine to what extent they could explain women's attitude to trade unionism. It concentrates firstly on the relationship between women and trade unionism in general to understand why women were usually under-represented in unions. By being in the majority, female tobacco workers constituted an exception, but the question is whether this exception was the product of an environment exceptionally favourable to women. This question will be examined in relation to various aspects such as the legitimacy of unions, their tendency (revolutionary or reformist), the attitude of men with regard to women, and unions' claims and regulations.

Whereas the second chapter concentrates on the male point of view, the third one is to give the other side of the story and assess how different women's vision of trade unionism was. After putting women's participation in its historical, general context, this chapter presents female membership in the two industries under scrutiny. It is a well known fact that quantity does not necessarily mean quality. This is why this chapter also explores women's actual role in unions activities and their personal approach to trade unionism in order to assess to what extent these female workers, and especially tobacco workers, could be regarded as militants through the examination of various forms of participation. As being a woman does not necessarily lead to becoming an active feminist, nor a feminist, this chapter also examines how female workers perceived their condition as women and position as workers in order to assess

their use of trade unionism as a means to express their feminine concerns and interests. This is particularly useful in order to qualify female tobacco workers exceptional position in the trade union movement.

The aim of the fourth chapter is to go deeper in the examination of the notion of militancy and show the relativity of its meaning when dealing with female union militancy. By examining in detail the female participation in labour conflicts it gives a new approach to female labour activity. This chapter concentrates firstly on women's quantitative participation, its reasons and implications. It subsequently examines their qualitative involvement, their role and attitude in strikes, in order to assess to what extent they changed according to gender and the environment. Strikes were a event where direct action prevailed other debates and where direct result mattered and, as such, they were still favoured by women, to the detriment of union membership. Yet, it must be envisaged that this corresponded to a more female approach to militancy; militancy in action rather than in words and, in this context, who could claim that a great speech was worth more than a successful strike to motivate the mass and gain class consciousness?

Keeping the title in mind, this study will finally qualify the extent to which female tobacco workers' militancy differed from the norm. If they were regarded as exceptional militants, it could be expected that they would be exceptional women. This was not the case because they were part of a consensus much greater than unions and, as such, they were also limited in their ability to change their perception of both trade unionism and womanhood. Although it cannot be denied that their militancy, like the female hatters', differed from men's, it could finally be argued that this difference between genders was more the result of women's inferior status in society in general than the expression of natural gender differences.

CHAPTER ONE:

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

As already mentioned in the introductory part of this study, the tobacco and hat industries have been selected because of their different characteristics. According to Madeleine Guilbert's general study[1]; although the attitude of male militants and the general policy of unions and federations towards women may have been a contributory factor in attracting or repelling women, it could be argued that the different elements characterising industries and the conditions in which women worked played an equal, if not greater, part in the relationship between women industrial workers and trade unionism. This first chapter is therefore to give priority to a detailed study of both industries, not only to highlight their main differences and similarities, but also to analyse the effects such features could have on the female workforce and its unionisation, or lack of it. However, such an analysis has to be related to the position and status of women in industry in general to see if women in both industries could be regarded as a typical example or an exception. Therefore, the first part of this chapter will give a brief general presentation of women industrial workers and will concentrate on three different aspects: the general image of women workers, their wages and the legislation relating to them as workers. This general presentation will be followed by a detailed description of the two industries under scrutiny, not only in relation to women as workers in particular, but also in relation to women's militancy in general. Thus, it will be possible to assess the consequences that the differences from one industry to the other could have on the representation of women in unions.

Women as industrial workers in general[2]

It goes without saying that women's participation in the labour force was not a product of the industrial era. However, this phenomenon was accelerated by the emergence of industrial work, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century. This would not have become so problematic for male workers, unions and officials, if it had not been accompanied by a general shift of the working place from home to workshops and factories, and therefore, by a continuous increase in the number and proportion of women working outside the home.

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[1] Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966.

[2] This section is by no means an exhaustive and detailed presentation of all the issues related to women at work. See the general bibliography, in particular the sources mentioned in this section, for further details.

The statistics indicate that there were 365 360 more women in industry in 1906 compared to 1896, corresponding to an increase of 19.34%. This increase was accompanied by an increase in the proportion of women (See appendix 1.1). However, this general picture hides some disproportion between industries. The general increase in the number of women must be taken as a general trend, but not as a rule to be applied in any industry. For instance, the proportion of women tended to increase in the food and book industries, but decreased in the mining industry, probably as the direct result of the legislation, introduced in 1892, forbidding underground work for women.

This growing proportion was traditionally explained by factors such as increased mechanisation, the changes which occurred in the ways work was performed and the general growth of production. Although some of these explanations have been recently challenged[3], it is not intended to comment on them at this stage, in so far as what is to be remembered for the purpose of this section is more the consequences than the causes of the increase in women's employment.

Characteristics of women's work

By the end of the century, industrial work for women was therefore a fact, but this work was by no means to be associated only with workshops and factories. On the one hand, there were women who worked in big industrial concentrations while, on the other hand, there were those working in small workshops or even at home. Thus, in 1906, women factory workers and women working at home accounted for about 25% and 36% respectively of the female working population[4]. There was also a difference to be made between those working in industries where women were in the majority, and those working along with a majority of men. However, whatever the industry, women workers shared some common features related to their nature as women which enhanced prejudices against them as workers.

One of the most important characteristics of women's employment was the fact that their prospects remained limited in many ways. As a result of their general lack of training, women tended to be concentrated in relatively unskilled and unproductive occupations:

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[3] See: Gertjan de Groot and Marlow Schover (eds.), Women Workers and Technological Change in Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries, London/ Bristol, Taylor & Francis, 1995, 206 p. It is argued, for instance, that technological changes did not necessarily lead to the regendering of work.

[4] Madeleine Rebérioux, *"L'ouvrière"*, Misérable et glorieuse, la femme au XIX^{ème} siècle, Paris, Fayard, 1980, p. 62.

"The reserve army of labour identified by Marx was in practice to a large degree made up of women."[5]

In addition, with the gender division of labour being extreme in many industries, women could rarely expect to have easy access to traditionally masculine occupations. Furthermore, as will be seen later in this chapter, specific legislation for women, and in particular the 1892 law, had a negative effect on their production capacity, therefore on their chance of competing with men on an equal footing.

Another important characteristic was that they were commonly paid less than men, a fact which played a great part in the general increase in their number, especially in industries in which women could perform the same tasks as men. According to the various documents published by the *Office du travail*[6], such as Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, the average wages for men were about twice as much as those for women. This publication shows, for instance, that between 1891 and 1893 the average wage in private industries was 6.15F a day for men compared with 3F for women in the Seine department, and 3.90F for men against 2.10F for women in the other departments[7]. On a national scale , the average wage for women was therefore 2.55F for that period.

There were numerous reasons to explain such a difference between male and female wages, but they were always related to women's so-called inferiority as workers[8]. Unlike men's work, women's work was rarely considered as permanent. Although most working class women engaged in paid employment at some stage in their life, it was thought that women should stop working outside the home after getting married or after giving birth. According to the 1906

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[5] Roger Price, A Social History of Nineteenth-Century France, London, Hutchinson, 1987, p. 213.

[6] The *Office du travail* was part of the *Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie*.
See:
Office du travail, La Petite industrie, salaires et durée de travail, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 2 vols., 1893, 1896.
Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 4 vols., 1893-1897.
Office du travail, Bordereaux de salaires pour diverses catégories d'ouvriers en 1900 et 1901, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1902, 233 p.
Ministère du commerce et de la prévoyance sociale, Salaires et coût de l'existence à diverses époques jusqu'en 1910, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1913.

[7] As noticed by Madeleine Guilbert, this survey did not take into account people working at home. This kind of work was particularly common among women, and tended to be paid even less. Therefore, the figures given here are probably to be regarded as a maximum. For further details, see Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp 17-20.

[8] See, in particular:
René Gonnard, La Femme dans l'industrie, Paris, A. Colin, 1906, pp. 106-110.
Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, Le Travail des femmes au XIX^{ème} siècle, Paris, Charpentier et Cie, 1888, pp 131-145.
André de Maday, Le Droit de la femme au travail: étude sociologique, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1905, pp. 121-124.
Joseph Vallier, Le Travail des femmes dans l'industrie, Grenoble, Allier Frères, 1899, pp. 24-59.
Charles Poisson, Le Salaire des femmes, Paris, Saints Pères, 1906, pp. 117-158.

census, 40.8 % of single women over 16 worked, against 20.2 % of those who were married[9]. Women's function as workers was therefore just a phase, the length of which was determined according to their principal functions as wives or mothers. Consequently, because they were usually regarded as temporary producers, their status as workers was depreciated in comparison to that of men:

> *"La quarantaine atteinte, l'ouvrière devient donc seulement exclusivement ménagère, entièrement vouée à la reproduction de la force de travail de l'homme et des jeunes des deux sexes."*[10]

As they were regarded as weak, it was thought that their nature prevented them from performing tasks as well as or as fast as men. Therefore , they were paid less because, as they performed and produced less, nobody would employ them if they were to be paid the same. This kind of argument was not only to be found among male workers to justify their higher wages, but also among employers and officials, as reflected in the final report of the 1891-1893 enquiry on wages:

> *"Pour des travaux qui peuvent être exécutés indifféremment par des hommes ou par des femmes, l'industriel préférera toujours des hommes, à salaire égal, parce que l'homme peut rendre plus de services s'il s'agit de manutentions et pourra remuer des charges plus lourdes; s'il s'agit de fabrication d'objets de métal, il pourra posséder plus complètement son métier, faire des travaux accessoires qui ne sont pas accessibles aux femmes, celles-ci ne pouvant opérer que dans des limites plus circonscrites. Il faut donc, dans ces cas, qu'un avantage dans le taux de salaires intervienne pour décider l'industriel à préférer les femmes aux hommes."*[11]

However, this low potential of production could also be related to their general lack of qualifications and training. The latter was traditionally limited for women, and when it was made available, it rarely went beyond three months or was often so specialised in one area that women were forced to stay within the same establishment or trade not to lose the benefits of their training, as was the case in the tobacco industry. As a result of their general lack of skills, compared to men, women were more easily replaceable, which increased the competition between women. In addition, some sectors of industry which employed a majority of women, such as the textile industry, suffered even more from the cheap labour performed in prisons and convents. This was to be put in parallel with the fact that women's perspectives in terms of opportunity and choice were limited. This intense competition was also reinforced by the fact that a substantial number of women regarded their work as a temporary supplement to the

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[9] These figures refer to the non-agricultural labour force as a whole.
[10] Madeleine Rebérioux, op. cit., p. 65.
[11] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, op. cit., p. 516.

family income, which helped to decrease the wages of those whose income was essential[12]. Consequently, in practice, women's wages were usually so low that it was extremely difficult for a woman to survive without the support of a family or a husband. This problem was often criticised by both unions and government as the main cause of prostitution. However, as shown in the following statement, it could also be regarded as the main cause of women's social submission:

> *"Le salaire de la femme n'est qu'un salaire d'appoint; il est fixé d'après un calcul qui pose en axiome que la femme doit avoir recours à quelqu'un qui l'aide. Normalement, ce quelqu'un est le mari, et de là déroule la sujétion de la femme dans le mariage; mais ce n'est pas toujours le mari, et ici éclate la profonde immoralité du régime capitaliste, qui, non seulement pousse les femmes à la prostitution (...) mais encore spécule sur la faculté qu'ont les ouvrières de trouver un supplément de salaire dans le trafic de l'amour, pour payer leur travail à un taux dérisoire."*[13]

In addition to their submission, women were also often presented as passive and ignorant. As will be examined later in the second chapter, trade unionists and workers often complained that female workers were ready to accept conditions men would not accept, and in this respect wages were often at the top of workers' claims. Therefore, it could be said that women got low wages also because they accepted them, or at least did nothing in particular to increase them, and did not call into question the imbalance between their wages and men's wages.

Women were also thought to have less needs than men, especially in terms of food and extras such as alcohol, tobacco and newspapers:

> *"La femme était moins exigeante, pour beaucoup de raisons (...) au premier rang desquelles on peut faire figurer celle-ci que ses besoins, primordiaux ou artificiels, sont moindres que ceux de l'homme."*[14]

This clearly shows the paradox which could exist between the fact that they were paid less and the causes of their lower wages; those in favour of lower wages for women took their inferiority to justify this gender difference in wages without taking into account that these inferior wages were actually one of the main reasons for their inferiority. Thus, it was thought degrading for a woman to smoke or go to bars and cafés, in other words, to act like a man and adopt masculine values. Therefore, it could be argued that low wages reflected and perpetuated the inferior position of women by preventing them from creating, affording and adopting values which could have been regarded as masculine or a threat to the masculine

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[12] See p. 30.
[13] Raoul Briquet *"Les questions féministes: le travail des femmes en France"*, Le Mouvement socialiste, 102, 15 August 1902, p. 1 520.
[14] René Gonnard, op. cit., p. 20.

ones. Consequently, wages were a way not only to reflect traditional, social values, but also to make sure that these values remained the same.

It must be borne in mind that the acuteness of women's exploitation varied according to the type of work they performed, and in this respect, home work was apparently the worst evil and a common destiny for thousands of women. In addition to their extremely low wages, one of the common features of these women was their isolation.

Competition was very strong in other ways. Geographically speaking, workers from provincial regions were a serious threat to those living in the Paris area because the former were paid less and were renowned for being less demanding. Convents were another source of competition which was frequently targeted in the struggle to protect the status of home workers. However, the worst came from the competition between workers themselves, between those whose work was an option to complement their family income while remaining at home, and those who needed to work to subsist, but could not leave their home for various reasons, such as child care[15]:

> *"Les premières sont, en général, des femmes âgées jouissant d'une petite rente ou des femmes mariées dont le mari gagne le nécessaire (...) Elles n'iraient pas à l'atelier, leur salaire n'étant pas indispensable (...) Elles apportent un soin extrême dans l'exécution, n'étant pas talonnées par le besoin et, ainsi, elles font une concurrence déloyale aux besogneuses qui sont obligées d'abaisser leurs prix."* [16]

As a whole, it could be said that in terms of wages, women were victims of a vicious circle: because of their inferior conditions and wages, they did not have many opportunities, nor much time, for training, therefore they could not get a well remunerated job; because they could not get a decent job, they tended to give up work when getting married to raise their children themselves. Their work was thus regarded as secondary and its value was therefore even more depreciated[17]. Finally, the inner logic was that they were paid less because they could be easily replaced and they were employed, because they were paid less.

Women and work

All the above reasons actually show the link which could exist between the traditional image of women workers and their low wages, with the latter reflecting the place of women in society as a whole. The relationship between women and work was complex, and complicated

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[15] See: Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France, op. cit., pp. 35-45.
[16] La Bataille syndicaliste, 16 October 1913, p. 2.
[17] André de Maday, op. cit., p. 124.

by those who had to deal with it in so far as the notion of paid work outside the home associated with women was often regarded as contradictory. What follows is only a brief presentation of what was generally thought of women, in relation to the notion of work, in public opinion. The views of trade unionists[18] and female workers[19] will be considered later in the course of this study.

As a whole, female labour away from the home was regarded as a social evil and women workers were denied the right to be classified both as proper women, since they acted in contradiction with the acknowledged models of family and femininity, and as proper workers, since they did not fit into the acknowledged, masculine pattern of work. Several reasons were usually given to explain such an attitude to women's employment:

> *"Le travail industriel de la femme fait baisser le salaire de l'homme et devient ainsi nuisible à la femme même, en l'obligeant, si elle est mariée et mère de famille, à délaisser son foyer pour aller à l'usine parfaire le salaire insuffisant du mari (...) Le travail à l'atelier, dans les métiers malsains, est préjudiciable, non seulement à la femme, mais encore à la race (...) Le travail de la femme en dehors désorganise la famille; son absence du foyer jette l'homme au cabaret et l'enfant à la rue. Elle même se démoralise à l'usine. Avec le travail industriel des mères grandit la criminalité des jeunes."*[20]

These reasons could be divided into four main categories. Firstly, women's work was economically wrong because it put men and women in competition and depreciated wages. Secondly, it was socially wrong because it prevented women from performing their natural tasks, hence weakening the sanctity of family life and creating the degeneration of both society and the race. Thirdly, it was morally wrong because it corrupted women's minds and morality by putting them in the presence of men[21]. Finally, it was physically wrong because it degraded women's bodies and health. For all these reasons, the increasing number of working women and their exploitation became part of what was to be called the "social question" and were to be dealt as such. Numerous studies and literary works were devoted to this matter. Official enquiries were launched, from the second part of the century onwards, to study the consequences of women's employment. Arguments ranged from the left to the right, from Jules Simon who regarded women's employment as the end of the family on which any society should be based, to the social Catholics of the Le Play school who were convinced that the

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[18] See Chapter 2, pp. 75-81 in particular.

[19] See p. 81 and pp 164-175 in particular.

[20] Marie-Louise Compain, La Femme dans les organisations ouvrières, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1910, pp 127-128.

[21] See, for instance: Marilyn J. Boxer, *"Foyer or Factory: Working Class Women in Nineteenth-Century France"*, Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Vol. 1, 1974, p. 193.

place of women was in the domestic household, but as a whole, most enquiries converged in the sense that they defined employment for women as exploitation and a social evil which had diverted them from their natural functions as mothers, wives and housewives[22].

These views did not take into account the fact that some women had to work, that work was not necessarily a matter of choice, that it could also be a necessity for women who had no family or nobody to support them. They considered their employment in relation to a global, ideal system of society in which women were referred to as reproducers, whereas men were referred to as producers. Therefore, following this logic, any improvement in this matter had to facilitate women's return to the home. In other words, not only did working women represent a threat to the male position in the workforce, but also a threat to the family, the whole race and the patriarchal system of society.

Legislation

Improvements on a national scale could only be obtained through protective legislation, which implied that the growing concern for working women had to be recognised at the top of the political sphere. This was not without ambiguity considering the fact that any government intervention in economic matters was not necessarily supported by both workers and employers[23] and, politically speaking, the government had nothing to expect from women, at least directly, as expressed in the following statement made by the Chairman of the *Commission du commerce et de l'industrie* in the early years of the twentieth century:

> *"On ne s'occupe pas de la femme ouvrière (...) parce qu'elle ne vote pas et qu'elle ne fait pas de grèves. De sorte qu'il n'y a ni crainte, ni espérance de ce côté."*[24]

On the one hand this statement was typical of a widely spread attitude towards women and the way the conditions they suffered from should, or rather should not, be approached. On the other hand, it was also believed that the state, although it was not its primary role to intervene in economic issues, should be the guide and encourage better conditions for women who were represented as weak, and therefore unable to protect themselves against any kind of

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[22] See the introductionary part of Marcelle Capy and Aline Valette, Femmes et travail au XIX^{ème} siècle, Paris, Syros, 1984, pp. 14-21.

[23] Workers would argue that regulating women's employment would go against their right to work and would have negative consequences on male wages as well, whereas employers would argue that it would reduce the productivity of their business.
For further information, see: René Gonnard, op. cit., p. 70 .

[24] This statement was quoted in: Charles Poisson, op. cit., p. 157. The author claimed to have received this answer when conducting a survey on women and legislation.

exploitation and the lack of concern of certain employers. In this respect, protecting women meant protecting the nation:

> *"Il faut absolument reconnaître et proclamer que l'ordre politique seul appartient à l'État. L'ordre économique qui a pour but la production et la répartition de la richesse ne lui appartient pas. L'État a néanmoins le droit d'y intervenir pour y remplir ce qui est proprement sa fonction: la protection des droits de ceux qui sont trop faibles pour se protéger eux-mêmes ou la défense des intérêts supérieurs de la famille, de la patrie, de la société ou de la morale publique (...) Ce rôle de justice, nous l'apercevons clairement lorsqu'il est question de l'enfant, de la santé et de la moralité de la femme."*[25]

From the 1880s onwards, and especially between 1890 and 1907, the government passed a series of laws that were, partially at least, promulgated in response to the growing concern for the social question, exacerbated by socialist ideas and the labour movement and conflicts[26]. By interfering in work regulations, the government might have given the impression of doing something for the workers, but it also created the means to control the workforce, and this was often criticised by union members.

According to Esther S. Kanipe "*the social legislation rested on two assumptions: firstly, that all problems in France were essentially moral; and secondly, that women, because of their particular nature and moral character, could be used to help to solve those problems*"[27]. Therefore, legislators were convinced that women should be used to restore social order. Aware that some working class families needed the income of daughters and wives as a means of living decently, they concentrated their attention on the control and regulation of female labour. Some laws were thus directly aimed at women.

Two major laws relating specifically to female industrial workers were passed during the period under scrutiny. Among other changes, the 2 November 1892 law limited the working day to eleven hours for women above eighteen years of age (Art. 3); women were no longer allowed to work between 9 pm and 5 am (Art. 4); they were guaranteed a weekly rest day. They could not be employed in unhygienic or dangerous trades (Art. 13 and 14). Employers were also made responsible for keeping good morals and decent behaviour in the working place (Art. 16). However, not only did this law apply only to industry, but some branches could get dispensations. The 30 March 1900 law modified the above in so far as men and

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[25] César Caire, La Législation sur le travail industriel des femmes et des enfants, Paris, A. Rousseau, 1896, pp. 8, 18.

[26] Numerous laws referring to the working class as a whole, such as those regulating strikes, unions, retirement schemes etc, also concerned women, but these will be seen later when considering the aspects they referred to. This section concentrates only on those relating to women in particular.

[27] Esther S. Kanipe, *"Working Class Women and the Social Question in the Late Nineteenth-Century France"*, Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Vol. 6, 1979, p. 299.

women working in the same place were not allowed to work more than 11 hours, with one or more breaks during the day totalling 1.5 hours. After two years, the working day would be reduced to 10 and a half hours, then 10 hours two years later.

As a whole, these two laws were badly implemented and generally poorly respected for various reasons: the politics and system of enforcement were deficient, government initiatives were not necessarily welcomed by both employers and unions and, in some cases, women themselves opposed this discriminatory law which prevented them from performing certain jobs at certain times and restricted their work in certain trades.

The growing concern with the low birth rate in France made the health and preservation of children an important matter too. As Esther S. Kanipe put it: *"The population problem made maternal care a patriotic issue"*[28]. After numerous parliamentary debates over maternity leave, the law of 27 November 1909 was passed. It allowed women to take an 8 week unpaid leave without losing their jobs. It was eventually completed in June 1913 when maternity leave was made mandatory. Workshops were also to have a special room to breast-feed, and women were entitled to two rests of half an hour every day for breast-feeding their babies. This law was complemented in 1913 with another one forbidding hard, exhausting work for women just after giving birth.

Such legislation was regarded as ambiguous and limited in many ways. Not only did legislators attempt to solve the problem according to their own limited experience of the working class, but they also did it according to their own social values; because order, family and patriotism should dictate their own lives, they chose them to dictate working class people's lives as well, despite the numerous differences in term of culture, values and way of life[29]. Another aspect to consider is the fact that these laws were passed with no consideration of working women's needs. This point has been well analysed by Mary Lynn Stewart in her study on women, work and the state[30]. Creating specific legislation for women implied that women were workers with special needs. A close look at this legislation would show however that these needs were identified according to the traditional image of women; because women were thought incapable of protecting themselves, they had to be protected, but they were not asked if they wanted to be protected. Consequently, protecting women in the workplace eventually reinforced their dependence on the patriarchal model of society by reducing their opportunities

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[28] Ibid., p. 301.

[29] Ibid., pp. 303-304.

[30] Mary Lynn Stewart, Women, Work and the French State: Labour Protection and Social Patriarchy, 1879-1919, Kingston/Montreal/ London, McGill Queen University Press, 1989, 277 p.

at work and encouraging their return to the home. Therefore, despite their substantial proportion in industry, women workers were not regarded as proper workers, but rather as victims of the system of society which forced them to work outside the home. Consequently, improving their situation meant reducing their exploitation by facilitating their return to their natural and social roles and by creating conditions which reduced their opportunity of employment.

Female workers in the tobacco and hat industries

Having considered women workers in general in the period prior to 1914, it is time to study in detail the two industries under consideration in relation to this context. Although it would be irrelevant to give a full description of the evolution of the tobacco and hat industries, it seems important to comment on key elements to have a clear idea of the working environment in which both tobacco workers and hatters evolved. The aim of this second section is therefore to survey the main characteristics of both industries and their respective workforce in order to finally establish a correlation between these features and the unionisation of women in these industries.

The characteristics of the two industries

Before going further into the quantitative information given in the various censuses, it seems important to say a few words on the type of industries under scrutiny. As previously mentioned, at the time it was commonly thought that the state should not intervene too much in the economic field. The age of nationalisation was yet to come. However, the organisation of the state itself and the different services to support it already employed thousands of people, in fact so many that the state was considered as the main employer in France. In addition, a number of industries were also under the direct control of the state. These industries could be classified into three main categories: those which were regarded as too vital to be run privately, such as those relating to French national security, military equipment and currency; those which were related to services provided by the state, such as the national gas and water companies; and those which were used as a source of income for the state through the system of indirect taxation. The tobacco industry belonged to the last category.

Cardinal Richelieu was the first to use tobacco as a source of income for the state by taxing its consumption in 1629[31]. This state monopoly was to be suppressed during the Great Revolution, but in 1810 Napoleon reintroduced it and extended it to the cultivation, production and sale of tobacco, mainly as a lucrative way of financing his costly military campaigns. The monopoly was transferred under the direct control of the *Ministère des finances* in 1860. The first factory to be built was apparently in Dieppe in 1684. In 1815, there were already 10 of them, and by 1912, 21 factories spread all over France (See appendix 1.2).

According to the 1896 and 1906 censuses, the highest concentration (respectively 18% and 16%) of people working in this industry was to be found in the Seine Department, which included three factories: Pantin, Reuilly and Le Gros Caillou. However, some factories were situated in small provincial towns, like Morlaix, Tonneins or Riom, whose economy relied almost entirely on their manufacture and the work it supplied for the local population.

In addition to the fact that it was controlled by the state, as opposed to the hat industry which was privately run, the tobacco industry was therefore concentrated in a relatively small number of industrial sites. This characteristic is quite obvious when considering the figures given in the 1896, 1901 and 1906 censuses. In 1896, there were 20 tobacco factories. Of these 20, all had more than 100 workers, six had less than 500, 12 had between 501 and 1 000 and two had more than 1 000. The average was about 681 people per factory[32]. In 1901, out of 19 tobacco factories, all had more than 200 workers. In 1906, out of 21 factories, only one had between 11 and 20 workers, four between 201 and 500, 11 between 501 and 1 000, and 5 between 1 001 and 2 000. Therefore, it could be said that, on average, tobacco factories contained more than 500 workers throughout the period.

The hat industry was far from following the same pattern. Like in the tobacco industry, in 1896, 1901 and 1906, the highest concentration of people working in the hat industry was to be found in the Seine Department. However, the concentration in provincial France varied according to the different branches of the industry. In 1896, for instance, the highest proportions of people making felt, silk and fur hats were to be found in the Seine (20%) and Aude (10%) Departments, whereas those making fashionable items were concentrated in the

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[31] These and ensuing details on the evolution of the tobacco industry before 1890 are taken from:
Slava Liszek, Cent ans tout feu, tout flamme, Paris, Fédération CGT des tabacs et allumettes, 1990, pp. 10-19.
SEITA, *"Histoires de notre histoire"*, C'est-à-dire, magazine de la SEITA, 157, Dec.-Jan. 1995, pp. 8-14.

[32] Ministère du commerce, de l'industrie, des postes et télégraphes, Résultats statistiques du recensement des industries et professions. Dénombrement général de la population du 29 mars 1896, Vol. 4, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1901, pp. 206-257.
The number of unemployed people has been taken away from the working population and the result has been divided by the number of factories.

Seine (27%) and Meurthe et Moselle (9%) Departments. Hatters making straw hats were mostly to be found in the Seine (21%) and Tarn et Garonne (23%) Departments. However, the main centres of business tended to move. It appears that the centres which grew from 1890 onwards were mainly small towns, like Espéraza, where the hat industry was already well established.

Variations could also be found when considering the structure and size of workshops. According to Jean Vial, in his study of the hat industry, there were 7 088 hatters in Paris in 1891, that is to say about seven workers per company[33]. According to the 1896 census, there were approximately 8 142 works of more than one person directly related to the hat industry in France that year. Among them, 7 635 had 10 people or less (93.77%). Only one had more than 500 people. The average was thus about eight people per business, as opposed to 681 in the tobacco industry[34]. As a whole, according to the various censuses, the majority of workshops in the industry had no more than five to ten people throughout the period, and their proportion tended to remain steady. However, the end of the century was marked by the appearance of relatively big businesses. By 1900, several businesses employed more than 100 workers, like *Mossant* in Bourg de Péage or *Tirard* in Nogent-le-Rotrou. The statistics provided as an appendix to the 1909 congress of the national federation of hatters also listed several examples of factories employing more than 200 workers: in Anduze and Fontenay-le-Comte, for instance. As a whole, small workshops persisted in areas where the hat industry was well established, like in Paris and Lyons, and specialised in the finishing process, whereas factories grew in rural areas and specialised in the actual making of hats. A closer look would also show some variations from one branch to another. Industrial concentration occurred in the making of men's hats in particular, whereas small to medium sized workshops persisted in the branch specialised in the making of women's hats. For instance, in 1890, out of 363 businesses employing 15 436 workers, 254, that is to say about 70%, had less than 20 workers[35].

The first differences which must therefore be borne in mind between both industries lie in the nature and size of businesses: the tobacco industry was a monopoly mainly composed of big industrial factories gathering hundreds of workers, directly controlled by representatives of the

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[33] Jean Vial, La Coutume chapelière, Paris, Domat-Montchrétien, 1941, p. 258.

[34] Ministère du commerce, de l'industrie, des postes et télégraphes, Résultats statistiques du recensement des industries et professions. Dénombrement général de la population du 29 mars 1896, Vol. 4, op. cit. , pp. 206-257.

[35] Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 259.

state, whereas the hat industry mainly consisted of small workshops individually owned, and accommodating a handful of workers each.

The idea that the state should be the first to protect workers meant that it had to deal with two aspects of reality at the same time: protecting all the workers by introducing legislation as seen in the first section of this chapter, and showing what a model employer should be through the example of state industries:

> *"Nous n'oublierons jamais que le premier devoir d'un État républicain est de donner l'exemple à l'industrie privée, et que le gouvernement de la République doit être le meilleur, le plus juste et le plus humain des patrons."*[36]

That is why it was also commonly thought that working in tobacco factories was a privilege:

> *"Elle a une bonne place! Elle travaille à la manufacture des tabacs! Qui de nous, dans nos milieux ouvriers, n'a déjà entendu cette double exclamation (...) Il s'est créé dans le public cette idée (...) que nos camarades des tabacs sont des privilégiés."*[37]

That is also why tobacco workers were thought to take advantage of their privileged situation:

> *"Tous les syndiqués sont persuadés que leur qualité d'ouvriers de l'État les place en dehors, les place au-dessus de la classe ouvrière; à leurs yeux, tous les privilèges dont ils jouissent et tous ceux qu'ils réclament sont inhérents à la qualité d'ouvrier de l'État."*[38]

Everything depends on what was actually meant by privilege. Was it a privilege in terms of wages? Piece work was the common lot for most tobacco workers. The basic rate was determined in accordance with the average cost of living in the regions where the factories were established. A progressive increase in wages was noticeable throughout the period (See appendix 1.3). It was generally thought that the wages of tobacco workers were higher than the national average. When confronted with actual figures, it seems that this thought reflected the truth. For instance, between 1891 and 1893, the average female wage in the tobacco industry was 2.91F, as opposed to the national average of 2.55F. In 1901, the national average was 2.75F and 3.59F in the tobacco industry[39]. In 1906, Caroline Milhaud, in her study L'Ouvrière en France, considered that wages of 2F or 2.50F a day could be regarded as good wages for women; in that respect women tobacco workers were not to be pitied with their 4F or so[40]. The speech made by the *Ministre des finances*, Mr. Ribot, at the *Chambre* in March 1895 would supplement this very well:

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[36] Maurice Bourgoin, De l'application des lois ouvrières aux ouvriers et employés de l'État, Paris, A. Rousseau, 1902, p. 24.

[37] *"Les bagnes capitalistes: manufactures des tabacs"*, La Voix du peuple, 8 March 1901, p. 3.

[38] Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, p. 348.

[39] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, *"Les ouvriers d'État"*, Le Mouvement social, 105, Oct-Dec 1978, p. 93.

[40] Caroline Milhaud, L'Ouvrière en France, Paris, F. Alcan, 1906, pp. 24-27.

"Nous n'avons pas cessé de nous préoccuper du bien être de ces ouvriers et que leurs salaires suivent une progression constante qui les a amenés à être réellement supérieurs aux salaires courants qui existent dans les localités où ils sont employés (...) L'augmentation représente, en 10 années, 10% pour les hommes et 27% pour les femmes, dont la situation avait particulièrement besoin d'être améliorée. C'est dans ces dernières années surtout que les augmentations ont été le plus sensible. En 1894, elles ont atteint 2,41% pour les salaires des hommes et 4,27% pour ceux des femmes dans l'ensemble des manufactures (...) Il serait donc tout à fait inexact de dire que l'État ne remplit pas ses devoirs et qu'il manque de sollicitude envers les ouvriers qu'il emploie."[41]

However, the *Ministre* forgot to comment on a few issues which would have revealed different aspects of reality. Even though tobacco workers' wages progressively increased throughout the period, the difference between men's and women's wages was evident (See appendix 1.3). The latter represented on average about 63% of men's wages between 1890 and 1907. In 1901 alone, this proportion was 64%, a big difference in comparison with the national average which did not exceed 45%[42]. This difference was usually justified by the fact that women were employed instead of men, when possible, precisely because they cost less. However, as will be seen later in this section, women and men had different functions in the tobacco industry and women were apparently preferred for their dexterity: unlike women, men performed tasks demanding more strength than skill. The gender difference in wages had therefore nothing to do with skills in this case. Thus, it could be argued that despite the decreasing gap between genders, the state did not really make an exception in terms of the depreciation of women's work.

There are other aspects the above speech did not take into account, like the differences which could exist between ages or regions or even between the official average and what workers actually got. In terms of age, the youngest women workers, below 21, and the oldest, above 60, were those with the highest wages[43]. In relation to personal ability and productivity, wages could vary considerably from one worker to another, and from one group of workers to another. Thus, in 1896, the average wage for cigar makers in Châteauroux and Morlaix, which both belonged to the same category of factories in terms of basic wages, were respectively 3.22F and 2.60F a day[44]. There were also differences in relation to the sections where the

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[41] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1895, p. 305.
[42] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, *"Les ouvriers d'État"*, op. cit., p. 93.
[43] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 472.
[44] Ibid., p. 117.

workers were employed[45]. For instance, in 1900 the average wage for a woman in the fourth section was 3.90F, whereas it averaged only 3.34F a day in the fifth section[46]. In terms of regional differences due to the various categories in which factories were classified, in 1900 for instance, the average was 3.30F for a woman from a factory belonging to the first category, as opposed to 2.92F for the third category[47]. Furthermore, it could be argued that the average wages set by the Central Management did not really mean anything in terms of what each individual actually got. In the 1891 congress of the federation, for instance, the Morlaix delegate mentioned average wages of 1.75F for women[48], whereas the official figure for this factory was 2.38F[49], that is to say, in any case, below the national average.

It has been more difficult to establish the average wage and its evolution for hatters in so far as no national statistical surveys were undertaken. However, two sources proved particularly helpful to give an idea of wage variations: The appendix to the 1892 congress of hatters and the 1891-1893 enquiry Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française[50]. The former indicated that hatters could be paid daily, weekly or annually. Payment by piece rate was widespread. They were paid differently from one workshop to another, according to their position, speciality and gender. Thus, a fuller in Aix would get 4F a day, whereas a fuller in Nemours would get 3F; in Châlon-sur-Saône, a shaper would get 24F a week, while a fitter would get 18F and a fuller 16.50F. It also appears that, for the same task, women were paid the same as men[51].

The second document gave more detailed information about these different aspects. Six regions were observed in 1892 in regard to the hat industry: Paris and its region; Vosges and Territoire de Belfort; Meurthe et Moselle; Tarn and Aveyron; Pyrénées Orientales and Aude; Tarn et Garonne, Lot et Garonne and Corrèze. It appeared clearly from the results of this

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[45] See p. 62.

[46] Ibid., p. 473.

[47] Ibid., p. 118.
There were four different categories of factories: Reuilly, Pantin and Le Gros Caillou belonged to the first one; Bordeaux, Dieppe, Le Havre, Lille, Lyons, Marseilles and Nice to the second one; Dijon, Le Mans, Nancy, Nantes, Orléans, Toulouse and Limoges to the third one; Châteauroux, Morlaix, Riom and Tonneins to the last one.

[48] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, Paris, 1892, p. 8.

[49] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 468-469.

[50] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, 4 vols, op. cit., 1893-1897.

[51] Rapport du huitième congrès national des ouvriers chapeliers de France, tenu à Aix, du 23 au 18 juillet 1892, Paris, Imprimerie J. Allemane, 1892, pp. 76-111.

enquiry that wage differences existed between genders, type of workshops and locations, for an average of 10 hours a day (See appendix 1.4).

In terms of gender, the hat industry was no exception: as was the case in the tobacco industry, a disproportion between male and female wages was noticeable. For instance, in factories composed of more than 100 workers, women got about 43% of men's wages in the Seine, and 49.33% in the Meurthe et Moselle Department. On average, the gender difference in wages was therefore much greater than in the tobacco industry. This was partly due to the fact that the hat industry was also characterised by an extreme gender division of labour, as will be shown later in this chapter. However, the gap between male and female wages tended to be reduced, if not non-existent, in some cases, when both women and men did the same work. Although women seldom performed the same task, the enquiry gave two examples of this practice of equal pay for equal work: The *bastisseurs* of the *Chambre Syndicale des ouvriers chapeliers de Louhans* got 1.50F a day, whereas the *bastisseuses* got 1.25F; both the male and female garnishers of the *Chambre syndicale des approprieurs chapeliers* in Lyons got 1.50F a day[52]. Therefore, it could be argued that, to some extent, the notion of skill prevailed over the notion of gender in the determining of wages, as opposed to what was said about the tobacco industry. Yet, it appears that women contributed to the devaluation of wages, in the sense that their increasing number reflected the deskilling of the trade, as expressed in L'Ouvrier chapelier in September 1896:

> *"L'extension de jour en jour plus grande que prend dans l'industrie le travail des femmes et des enfants, à la suite des progrès accomplis dans le machinisme, a exercé une influence déprimante sur les salaires des ouvriers."*[53]

In addition to the differences relating to gender, variations according to location - the Paris area being the region with higher average wages - and the size of businesses were visible. The lowest wages were generally to be found in big factories, which is not surprising in so far as industrial concentration was often (but not always as in the case of the tobacco industry) associated with mechanisation and deskilling.

However, on average, the wages of women hatters were below the national average of 2.55F and below the average of tobacco women workers. For example, wages for women hatters in Paris and its area varied from 2.20F to 2.95F, whereas the average for this area was 3F. In the same period of time (1891-1893) and the same area, these figures were respectively 3.69F and

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[52] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 754-757.

[53] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 6 September 1896, p. 4.

4.23F for women tobacco workers[54]. The notion of female wages seen as secondary income could therefore take its full meaning in the hat industry, as reflected in the comment the boss of the company *Voronick* gave to a woman complaining about the lowness of her wages:

> *"Prenez un amant, si vous n'êtes pas contente, ou bien emportez du travail chez vous!"* [55]

Another aspect to consider is related to sector-based differences. By 1890, one of the main figures of the federation of hatters, Charcosset, complained about the false idea that the hat industry was well-paid:

> *"La légende consiste dans l'erreur de croire que la chapellerie est un métier lucratif, parce que quelques spécialistes habiles, appartenant à la catégorie de la tournure, qui a toujours été l'aristocratie du métier, se sont vantés outre mesure à l'époque des bonnes saisons."*[56]

There were indeed strong sector-based differences in wages. According to Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française[57], in the Seine department at this time a *souffleuse* earned about 3.00F per day, a woman garnisher between 2.75F and 3.00F, a straw sewer between 3.00F and 3.50F and a milliner 2.75F. There were also variations within the same branch of the hat industry. Milliners for instance were far from getting all the same. The rate per hour could vary from 0.06F to 0.50 F in 1896 [58] and from 0.05F to 0.40F in 1901, according to their skills:

> *"Les modistes qui créent la mode sont considérées comme des artistes et payées en conséquence. Elles sont les reines du métier et ont de 300 à 500F par mois, elles peuvent monter jusqu'à 700. Au dessous d'elles, le monde des modillons se divise en apprêteuses et garnisseuses."*[59]

These kinds of variations in wages also depended on workers' location, working place and the fact that they were or not accommodated and fed by their employer[60]. Yet, the greatest differences were to be found between those working in factories or workshops and those working on their own. Indeed, as opposed to the tobacco industry where most of, if not all, the work was performed in big factories, working in isolation was far from being unknown to hatters. The following figures, calculated from the data given in the 1896 and 1906 censuses, include both workers working from home for an employer and owners of small businesses

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[54] See Charles Mannheim, op. cit, p. 468-469.
[55] L'Ouvrier chapelier, January 1914, p. 3.
[56] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 15 March 1891, p.3.
[57] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 1, op. cit., p 398.
[58] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française,, Vol. 4, op. cit., pp. 248-351.
[59] Charles Poisson, op. cit, p. 68.
[60] Office du travail, Bordereaux de salaires pour diverses catégories d'ouvriers en 1900 et 1901, op. cit., pp. 168-171.

who worked on their own. In 1896, out of the 53 449 women working in the hat industry, 22 887 or 42.82% worked on their own[61]. According to the 1906 census, 44% of women worked on their own[62], which is much higher than the national average of 36% of women working at home. A closer look at these data reveals that milliners formed the majority of isolated workers. For instance, among the 10 different work categories included in the 1896 census, milliners and fashion designers constituted 94.8% of the women working on their own in the hat industry. Although it tended to decrease, the proportion was still high in 1906 at 44.17%. Another interesting figure is the proportion of female milliners and fashion designers working on their own compared to the total population of female milliners and fashion designers. Once again the results are striking: 50.7% in 1896 and 49.9% in 1906, as opposed to respectively 3.52% and 3.44% for female hatters making felt, silk and plush hats. Such examples and striking differences between the different categories of hatters can only show that they were less likely to feel part of the same "family", but also had less opportunities to develop such a feeling.

Another aspect which cannot be missed is the time devoted to work. According to the enquiry Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, working hours per day tended to be fewer in the tobacco industry than in the hat industry (See appendix 1.5). The tobacco industry in this respect could be presented as a model in so far as, according to Charles Mannheim[63], the Central Administration rarely departed from the 1892 law. The average working day could not exceed 10 hours except in special circumstances when an extra hour could be demanded, at least before 1904 when such practice became illegal. Thus, workers were asked to work for an extra hour every day from May to July 1898. The reactions to this decision varied. The debates which took place on this matter during the 1898 congress shows that no consensus could be reached on this matter among all the workers. Most of them being piece workers, some could not resist the opportunity for extra money. The secretary of the trade union at Le Gros Caillou (Paris) mentioned 15 female trade unionists (out of 950) who agreed to work an 11 hour day[64]. The section in Dijon complained that only unionists refused the extra hour[65], whereas the delegate of two unions, one male, one female criticised women members for

[61] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Résultats statistiques du recencement des industries et professions, Dénombrement général de la population du 29 mars 1896, op. cit., pp. 206-257.
Unemployed women have not been taken into account in this calculation.
[62] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement général de la population effectué le 4 mars 1906, Vol. 1, op. cit., , p. 214.
[63] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 245-246.
[64] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1898, p. 3.
[65] Ibid., p. 4

accepting the conditions imposed by the Central Administration[66]. In November 1905, the tobacco workers' working day was subsequently reduced to nine hours, that is to say 54 hours a week. In November 1913, they obtained the *"semaine anglaise"*, that is to say 49 hours with the Saturday afternoon off, to be applied once a month as a trial. The *Sénat* eventually voted this reform on 11 July 1914.

In addition to relatively short working days, tobacco workers benefited from a day off per week, usually Sundays. Their working day was interrupted with a hour and a half break and women were never employed at night. In 1911, they were also allowed paid leave of six days per year, extended to 12 days in 1912, which was quite exceptional for factory workers in this period.

The hat industry on the other hand belonged to the industries that were allowed dispensations to the 1892 law in certain special circumstances, according to a decree passed in July 1893. According to the enquiry Salaires et durée du travail, the average working day varied from 9.5 to 12.5 hours[67] in the 12 factories and workshops visited in 10 departments (Vosges, Territoire de Belfort, Meurthe et Moselle, Tarn, Aveyron, Aude, Pyrénées Orientales, Tarn et Garonne, Lot et Garonne and Corrèze). By 1911, although working days apparently rarely exceeded 10 hours, factories and workshops where workers worked 12 hours could still be found in certain places like in the straw hat industry in Nancy[68]. It must be added that since the hat industry was very seasonal, working hours depended on the time of the year and tended to be shorter in winter. As a whole, the impact of the 1892 legislation was difficult to assess. However, it appears that it had some benefits and contributed to shorter working days in the industry as a whole, as expressed in L'Ouvrier chapelier in September 1896:

> *"Quant à la durée du travail, la protection que la loi a accordée aux femmes et aux enfants occupés dans l'industrie, a profité aussi aux ouvriers adultes."*[69]

In addition to showing the benefit of the law for men as well as children and women, the above statement shows the extend to which women were regarded as inferiors; they were not to be put on the same level as male workers not only because they were female, but also because they were not regarded as adults.

As mentioned below, working hours varied according to the amount of work available; in the tobacco industry the production tended to be a continuous process, whereas the making of

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[66] Ibid., p. 1.
[67] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail, Vol. 2, op. cit., , pp. 663-664.
[68] Ministère du travail et de la prévoyance sociale, Salaires et coûts de l'existence à diverses époques, jusqu'en 1910, op. cit., 1913, p. 163.
[69] L' Ouvrier chapelier, 6 September 1896, p. 4.

hats was a seasonal occupation. That is why differences between both industries were also noticeable in terms of unemployment. In the tobacco industry as a whole, it appears that workers worked between 290 (Châteauroux) and 306 (Dijon) days a year in the early 1890s, according to the enquiry Salaires et durée du travail[70]. It seems that the factory in Morlaix was the only one where unemployment as such was still in practice by 1896[71]. According to the 1896 census, out of 11 431 women in the working population, only 62 were unemployed, that is to say 0.54%. This proportion was slightly higher than that of men which did not go beyond 0.50%. However, it has to be borne in mind that tobacco workers being state workers, periods of unemployment were rare and usually limited to bank or local holidays and periods of inventory which represented a few days in December and June. As the census was performed in March, the rates given above probably correspond to temporary suspensions rather than unemployment in the proper sense. This idea would be substantiated by the fact that no women were declared unemployed in the 1906 census. As a whole, Charles Mannheim mentioned an average of 307 working days in the early 1900s[72].

On the contrary, from 1891 onwards, L'Ouvrier chapelier referred to the apparition of a permanent form of unemployment in the hat industry:

> *"Nous n'avons dans notre industrie qu'un temps fort limité (février, mars, avril) pour nous livrer à un travail sérieux."*[73]

This phenomenon is also noticeable when studying the following figures. Out of 26 businesses observed during the 1891-1893 enquiry in 21 departments, 14 were opened 300 days a year, the average varying from 243 days to 307[74]. However, this does not mean that all the workers worked when the workshops were opened. For instance, the enquiry indicates that the businesses were opened on average for 294 days a year, but there were only 284 working days[75]. The average in the 21 departments was about 282 working days. According to the 1896 census, out of 10 997 women hatters in the working population, 375 were declared unemployed, that is to say 3.41%[76]. In 1906, the proportion of declared unemployed women was 2.13%[77], excluding milliners. The appendix attached to the 1909 congress of the hatter's

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[70] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail, op. cit, Vol. 3, pp. 313-316.
[71] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1896, p. 2.
[72] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 69.
[73] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 26 March 1893, pp. 2-3.
[74] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 2, op. cit., pp. 475-483.
[75] Ibid., pp. 536-537.
[76] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Résultats statistiques du recencement des industries et professions, Dénombrement général de la population du 29 mars 1896, Vol. 4, op. cit., pp. 206-257.
[77] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement général de la population effectué le 4 mars 1906, Vol.

federation also provided important information regarding unemployment in this industry. In that time, the period of unemployment could vary from three weeks in the case of fancy hat makers in Caudéran, to six months for straw hat makers in Bourg and Épinal[78]. In 1911, the proportion of declared unemployed hatters was 2.54%[79].

According to the enquiry Salaires et durée du travail, out of 131 milliner businesses observed in 1892, 66 had an average working year of 300 days or more; the figures varying from 150 days in several cases to 360 days in one case in Bohain[80]. However, it must be said that in this last particular case the milliners were accommodated and fed by their employer, therefore the number of their working days was probably determined according to the number of days they lived at their employer's. As a whole, the milliners observed worked 267 days a year on average. According to the 1896, 1906 and 1911 censuses, the proportion of declared unemployed milliners was respectively, 2.38%, 2.5% and 2.62%, which shows an increase.

Unemployment in the hat industry had two major consequences on hatters' lives. First of all, they were permanently on the move to find a job. Jean Vial mentioned the case of a hatter who, from 1880 to 1891, subscribed to the local union in six different places. In Paris in 1892, out of 18 members in the *Commission administrative* of the federation, 15 had worked in provincial regions before. Secondly, hatters often had to find another job to supplement their income: they were rarely full time hatters[81], which could in turn have some impact on the way they perceived their belonging to the "hatters' family". In contrast, workers in the tobacco industry worked continuously and their job was permanent, therefore they could identify themselves as full time tobacco workers, which probably gave them a sense of security, unity, confidence and pride.

However, this job stability, coupled with high wages and comparatively shorter working time, was not the only advantage from which tobacco workers benefited. As early as 1884, the state had decided to introduce a pension scheme in the tobacco industry. In June 1890, tobacco workers were secured a pension of 400F for men and 320F for women, at 60 years of age, after 30 years of service. This pension was increased to respectively 600F and 400F in March

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1, op. cit., p. 214.

[78]Appendix attached to: Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française Quatorzième congrès national, tenu à Esperaza, tenu les 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 et 24 juillet 1909, Saint Maur, Imprimerie Moderne, no date, no page number.

[79] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recensement général de la population effectué le 5 mars 1911, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, pp. 60-61.

[80] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 4, op. cit., p. 348.

[81] Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 251.

1892, from the age of 65[82], and subsequently to 720F and 540F in January 1910. This scheme was far from being perfect, especially when considering the numerous complaints tobacco workers made about it in L'Écho des tabacs for instance. They constantly regarded it as insufficient, and spent years trying to increase it. It also reflected the disproportion between male and female workers, which was in a sense justified by the disproportion existing between male and female wages. However, despite its imperfections, it must be borne in mind that tobacco workers benefited from such a scheme well before their fellow workers in the private sector. State pension schemes were introduced for industrial workers only in 1910, and employers rarely provided company schemes for their workers before this date: for instance, in Paris in 1891, out of 451 private and 24 state companies, only 5%, representing 14% of the workforce, provided pension schemes[83]. Therefore, the tobacco workers could be regarded as privileged, compared to hatters, in so far as their pension was better than no pension at all[84].

The same could be said about tobacco workers when considering all the other provisions they benefited from in order to make their working lives less hazardous, if not more pleasant or easier. As state workers, they benefited from schemes supported, indirectly or directly, by the state at a time when employers did not systematically provide their workers with protective plans. For instance, according to the 1891 enquiry in Paris, only 45% of the companies visited provided their workers with insurance against accidents, 17% were paid by employers, 14% by workers and 59% paid by both. Only 26% had aid associations[85]. In the tobacco industry, the first mutual aid associations were created in the late 1850s. In 1889, the Central Administration subsidised them by providing 1F per year per person. In July 1895, a system of assistance in case of illness was established in all the factories. The scheme provided medical care and medicine, health insurance, a daily allowance in case of illness and covered the cost of funerals. The subscription varied from one factory to another (3F a month for men and 2F for women, in Reuilly, 2F and 1.50F in Pantin) but, in any case, they once again reflected the inequality of income between male and female workers. This inequality was also to be found in

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[82] The age limit was lowered to 60 again in 1893.

[83] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 528.
The enquiry did not consider small businesses and must be regarded as an estimation. It was undertaken in 1891 in 475 Parisian companies employing 67 400 workers, which represented about one fourth of the workforce employed in the medium and big industry in the capital city.

[84] For further information on this state pension scheme and the reactions to it within the CGT, see:
CGT, La CGT et le mouvement syndical, Paris, CGT, 1925, pp. 436-437.
Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 144-151, 484-488.
Jeanne Bouvier, Mes mémoires: une syndicaliste féministe, 1876-1935, Paris, La Découverte, 1983.

[85] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 528.

the daily allowance men and women got; in the early 1900s, the former received 1.50F in provincial factories, and 2F in Paris, the latter 1F and 1.40F.

In April 1898, the *Ministre des finances* developed a scheme to protect workers against accidents at work, according to which:

> *"Tout ouvrier blessé en cours de travail, quand il n'y a pas eu imprudence de sa part, reçoit pendant la durée de sa maladie, une indemnité journalière égale à la moitié de son salaire; si la blessure est grave ou si l'incident est fortuit ou étranger au travail dont l'ouvrier est chargé (...) l'indemnité peut être majorée et portée jusqu'au salaire entier."*[86]

Before 1898, workers had to be members of a mutual aid association to receive all the benefits. However, the 1898 reform also introduced a system of direct assistance, in parallel with what was called the system of subscriptions (mutual aid associations), which meant that workers were free to be members or not. This reform had great repercussions on mutual aid associations; their membership rate progressively decreased to the benefit of trade unions in the industry. Such an evolution shows that tobacco workers favoured a more independent form of protection; they had an advantageous situation but were also keen to control it on their own. Consequently, the number of women benefiting from the direct assistance scheme was multiplied by 14.5 (against 30.3 for men) in four years, that of women belonging to mutual aid associations divided by almost two (against 2.6 for men)[87]. In a way, this relates directly to the general attitude of tobacco workers towards the state. As will be seen later in this study, they tended to take advantage of the state and the benefits it provided when this could serve their own purposes, but denied any interference from the state in the running of workers' organisations or unions.

Tobacco workers benefited from other state benefits and provisions which were unknown to most workers from the private sector, such as: allowances for workers going on retirement or for those in temporary precarious situations; tobacco allowances; medical services and libraries attached to every factory; and even saving banks. Although all these provisions were to serve all the workers with no distinction according to gender, according to Charles Mannheim the latter were particularly advantageous for female workers in so far as:

> *"L'ouvrière, au moment où elle vient de toucher le salaire de sa dizaine, se laisse bien souvent entraîner à des dépenses inutiles ou futiles; pour s'en convaincre, il suffit de considérer le nombre de petits commerçants et camelots qui, les jours de paie, s'assemblent toujours en grand nombre aux portes des usines. Enfin, alors même que la femme a le goût de l'épargne, il ne*

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[86] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 175.
[87] Ibid., p. 475.

lui est pas toujours possible de soustraire le salaire qu'elle a gagné à son mari[88]*, qui souvent le dépense au cabaret."*[89]

Beyond the cliché of the frivolous woman and drinking man, this statement, as well as all the provisions mentioned above, reflect the image of the state wishing to present itself as a model employer who protects its workforce from destitution and from themselves through a series of protective measures. However, protection took its full meaning when dealing with women in so far as women were also to be mothers. In this respect, some measures related to women directly to the benefit of their health and offspring. These were the outcome of an internal logic: protecting state female workers was to protect the state itself through the protection of motherhood and childhood.

In terms of protection of children, from 1889 onwards, women who had just given birth got 20F[90]. This allowance was increased to 30F in 1898. They were not allowed to resume work before a period of 20 days, during which they received 1F30 a day[91]. In 1900, illnesses related to pregnancy were eventually covered by the general scheme related to illness. In terms of provisions for children, a number of factories provided crèches (Nantes, Toulouse, Nancy, Bordeaux, Riom, Dijon, Le Mans, Châteauroux and Orléans) and nursery schools (Toulouse, Nantes, Bordeaux, Le Mans, Reuilly). Such provisions show that children had to be protected even after birth to make sure that they survived[92]:

"La seule solution pratique, pour sauvegarder la vie des enfants d'ouvrières était d'installer des crèches attenantes aux manufactures, en sorte que la mère puisse apporter l'enfant en venant à son travail, l'emporter en le quittant et l'allaiter dans le courant de la journée, sous la surveillance de personnes expérimentées."[93]

As shown by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, such concern for children had also an impact on how women in the tobacco industry would perceive themselves. Being admitted in a crèche would almost guarantee a post in the factory in the future. Therefore, girls would be brought up in the shadow of the state, would become state workers before getting a state pension. Thus, all the provisions mentioned above aimed at taking care of the workers from the cradle to the grave, under the supervision of the state[94]. This had at least two consequences; from their childhood, women would see themselves as workers, as opposed to

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[88] Women had to wait until July 1907 to be allowed to make use of their wages without the consent of their spouse.

[89] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 188.

[90] Until 1894, the allowance was to be given only to married women.

[91] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1901, p. 3.

[92] It will be seen later that the infant mortality rate was quite high among female tobacco workers' children.

[93] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 190.

[94] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 107.

the traditional image of women, and, once workers, they would associate their fate with the state, as opposed to workers from the private sector. As will be seen later, the state provided its workers with the facilities they needed to feel powerful and the weapons with which they would fight for their rights.

However, these rights were also to be linked with the working conditions in the sense that the latter partly determined the former. First of all, in terms of sanitary conditions and health, there is a noticeable difference between the official version and the workers' version, especially in the tobacco industry. In 1896 for instance, the federation demanded an enquiry to be carried out on the hygiene and security of the factories. The enquiry concluded that there was no need for any improvement. Thus, on the one hand Charles Mannheim would say:

> *"Les rapports qu'adressent à l'administration chaque année les médecins des établissements constatent toujours unanimement que l'état sanitaire du personnel des manufactures est aussi bon, sinon meilleur, que celui de la classe ouvrière qui vit dans les mêmes communautés."*[95]

On the other hand, the danger of working with products containing nicotine was a constant concern for workers. For instance, it could be read in L'Écho des tabacs in September 1897:

> *"Les médecins des manufactures le savent tellement bien, que les trois quarts des personnes malades sont soignées au lait, ce qui est un contrepoison, et quand les ouvrières arrivent à l'âge de 50 ans, très peu sont valides et sont obligées de finir leur existence dans d'affreuses douleurs si elles ne quittent pas l'atelier."*[96]

The danger of nicotine was not the only subject of complaint from the tobacco workers, but its importance was exacerbated by the fact that it was thought to have a direct consequence on the infant mortality rate among the children of women working in tobacco factories:

> *"Mr. le docteur Étienne, de Nancy, a constaté que la mortalité des enfants des ouvrières en tabacs est supérieure au double de la mortalité infantile dans l'ensemble de la mortalité ouvrière (...) La nicotine rend la maternité très difficile en causant un empoisonnement des enfants dans le sein de leur mère, ainsi meurent-ils peu après la naissance."*[97]

This concern was such that the federation presented a report on this matter at the 1893 workers' national congress. Among other facts, this report stated that the work for women in the factories went "*beyond measure*" and took on "*the features of barbarity and ferocity*"; that the death rate of the children born from women tobacco workers exceeded 60%; and that

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[95] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 49.
[96] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1897, p. 1.
[97] Henri Dagan, *"Conséquences du travail féminin"*, La Revue blanche, May-August 1902, p. 612.

at Le Gros Caillou, out of 377 children born from 114 women, 233 died before reaching the age of ten.[98]

However, the official version once again differed:

> *"Si, en fait, la mortalité infantile est souvent très considérable parmi les enfants d'ouvrières des manufactures, cela semble être imputé, non à l'influence du tabac, mais au manque de soins, nécessairement très fréquent de la part des mères occupées dans les ateliers dix heures par jour."*[99]

All these differing views are to show how difficult it has been to assess the actual situation. Unlike the congresses of the federation or L'Écho des tabacs, official sources, such as Charles Mannheim's, tend to give a rather positive image of the sanitary conditions of factories, in particular the new ones. It is not intended to take one side of the story on this matter in the sense that what matters for the purpose of this study is rather showing the differences compared to the hat industry.

As far as the hat industry was concerned, according to the appendix of the 1892 federative congress, out of 70 companies whose salubrity was described, 34 were regarded as salubrious[100]. Despite this relatively positive result, the examination of the federative paper on the contrary showed a rather alarming situation, as revealed in the following statements:

> *"La couperie de poils occupe le sixième rang et les ouvriers chapeliers le dixième rang comme industries insalubres (...) Les ouvriers chapeliers occupent le premier rang avec les peintres et les broyeurs de couleurs pour la gravité des cas d'empoisonnement ou de durée de séjour dans les hôpitaux (...) Dans les grands centres, tels que Paris, on entasse des quantités d'ouvriers et d'ouvrières dans des espaces les plus restreints possible (...) où chacun se surmène d'une façon excessive dans un atmosphère empuanté et alourdi par la chaleur des fourneaux ou des chaudières, la vapeur des étuves."*[101]
>
> *"L'ouvrier et l'ouvrière coupeurs de poils n'ont qu'une courte existence de travail. L'irritation des poumons par les débris de polis, l'insalubrité des ateliers et l'empoisonnement par le mercure font qu'après dix ans de travail, l'ouvrier de cette profession, s'il n'a pas succombé, est devenu incapable de travailler et doit être secouru par l'assistance publique."*[102]
>
> *"(...) et les ouvrières qui, du matin au soir jettent la bourre sans qu'aucune ventilation ne vienne diminuer l'absorption nocive. Parfois le soufflage se fait en ateliers clos; l'air y est alors absolument irrespirable et les ouvriers sont frappés en grand nombre par la tuberculose."*[103]

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[98] Compte rendu du congrès national des chambre syndicales et groupes corporatifs ouvriers, juillet 1893, Paris, Imprimerie Jean Allemane, p. 59.

[99] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 53.

[100] Rapport du huitième congrès national des ouvriers chapeliers de France, op. cit., pp. 96-111.

[101] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 21 May 1893, p. 2.

[102] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 2 August 1891, pp. 3-4.

[103] Léon and Maurice Bonneff, Les Métiers qui tuent, Paris, Bibliographie Sociale, 1905, p. 47.

As a whole, the aspects considered in the above statements do not greatly differ in the sense that they all more or less relate to the consequences of working with harmful products in insalubrious workshops. However, when examining federative papers and congresses, the greater recurrence of the description of the situation, as well as the greater variety of reasons to complain among hatters, seem to indicate that tobacco workers were better treated in general. In terms of air quality, both industries had to deal with dusty products, but complaints about ventilation was more frequent among hatters. In terms of the manipulation of dangerous products, tobacco workers were better off in the sense that they did not have to come into direct contact with products such as mercury or vitriol in the making process. Furthermore, in terms of personal hygiene, tobacco workers were provided with facilities such as toilets outside the workshops, bathrooms, baths, changing rooms and canteens. Considering the average size of workshops in the hat industry, it could be assumed that hatters were rarely supplied with such facilities.

Considering health matters and sanitary conditions is useful to understand how workers were treated in the physical sense, but another aspect to consider is their treatment in a moral sense in order to comprehend the way they were perceived and perceived themselves as workers better. On the one hand, the examination of work regulations provided useful information. What follows concerns only the regulations which had a direct impact on women in order to stay in line with the purpose of the present study. On the other hand, workers' comments from federative papers and congresses were used to gather information on the way these regulations were perceived by the workforce.

Considering the number of workers working together in the same factory, the organisation of work had to be strictly regulated in the tobacco industry. Work regulations could be classified into three different categories. A first category aimed at regulating the workforce according to the necessity of a regular rhythm of production. Workers were thus disciplined and controlled to fit in time and space into a general pattern of production. In this category were included all the regulations concerning the conditions of employment, training, transfers or promotions and working time.

In terms of conditions of employment, women had to be above 12 and under 28 of age and present a certificate of good behaviour to get employed. Although being a family member or relative of tobacco workers was never a criterion for employment, many articles in L'Écho des tabacs demonstrate that most tobacco workers considered that priority should be given to

their family and relatives. Thus, in May 1898, the union in Nantes approved the following claim:

> *"Voir de préférence, et c'est parfaitement juste, embaucher comme nouvelles, les filles ou les parentes des ouvrières employées à la manufacture. Cela serait plus rationnel et provoquerait moins de mécontentement."*[104]

They succeeded in making this a common practice to a certain extent. Thus, many cases of members of the same family working in the same factory could be found in the federative paper. For instance, in the first ten months of 1900, out of 26 women who were recruited in Le Havre, 10 were related to the workers or employees[105]. This shows that, despite their endless criticism, tobacco workers were aware of their advantageous situation as workers and were eager to make their family benefit from it too. As a result, it could be said that tobacco workers formed some kind of clique, apart from the rest of the working class and not ready to share their privileges with other workers outside the tobacco industry. However, this kind of selfish attitude came to be criticised by some unionists who declared, for instance:

> *"Il y a des égoïstes qui veulent faire entrer toute leur famille dans la manufacture et qui ne pensent pas que d'autres aussi ont besoin de travailler (...) La manufacture des tabacs n'est pas le monopole de ses ouvriers, elle appartient à tout le prolétariat."*[106]

Thus, during the 1906 congress, some, like Fraxe claimed that 30% of the recruitment should be left to workers from outside the industry, which nonetheless left 70% to family members and relatives.

In terms of working time, a bell was to announce the opening and closing, ten to fifteen minutes later, of the factory gates. Originally, workers who were late were not allowed to enter the factory before the next mid-day call and would therefore lose half a day's pay. They were also likely to get suspended in the event of any subsequent delay. This was a matter of great concern, especially among women who criticised the unfairness of such a tight schedule:

> *"Quand on pense que les ouvrières ayant fourni dix heures de travail à l'administration ne rentrent chez elles que pour recommencer une autre journée, surtout celles qui sont chargées de famille (...) souvent ne se couchent qu'à onze heures ou minuit, ayant consacré ces veillées au soin du ménage. Il est donc compréhensible qu'avec autant de surmenage, des ouvrières épuisées de fatigue puissent se trouver en retard, elles sont déjà suffisamment punies quand elles s'aperçoivent du temps que cela leur fait perdre involontairement."*[107]

As a result, workers eventually got two entry times in the morning and two in the afternoon:

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[104] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1898, p. 3.
[105] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1901, p. 3.
[106] Quoted by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquart in *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit. , p. 106.
[107] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1896, p. 3.

"Depuis de longues années, les ouvrières ont le droit de rentrer le matin, à huit heures ou huit heures trente afin de pouvoir conduire leurs enfants à l'école."[108]

A second category of regulations tended to regulate the output of the workforce. These regulations concentrated on regulating workers as producers:

"La négligence, la paresse, l'habitude d'un travail défectueux, les absences fréquentes ou une absence prolongée sans motifs légitimes ou sans autorisation préalable (...) peuvent être punis par le renvoi de la manufacture."[109]

This shows that workers could be dismissed in case of serious hindrance to regulations. Other reasons for dismissals included: insubordination, abusive remarks, drunkenness, fights and arguments or notoriously bad conduct outside the factory. This last point shows that the management intended to control the behaviour of its workforce even outside the factory gates, in order to preserve its image of discipline, order and morality. This corresponded to the fact that women workers had to provide a certificate of good behaviour before entering the factory. Their private life as women was therefore to be directly linked to their life as workers. In 1894 for instance, L'Écho des tabacs mentioned the case of the management refusing to reintegrate a woman into the Dijon factory because of some aspect of her private life[110].

The notion of good behaviour was actually the purpose of the third category of regulations. The latter was to control and regulate workers as individuals or group of individuals, by eliminating all sorts of behaviour and habits which could endanger the order and coherence of the whole productive system as well as call into question the authority and power of superiors. Once in, the workers had to go and get changed before going to their workshop for the roll call. In principle, they were not allowed to leave their workshop or go to another workshop without permission, although cases of disrespect for this rule were rather common:

"Chez nous aussi, c'est interdit de monter aux masses[111]*. Je m'y suis trouvée dernièrement, le chef de section me dit que ce n'était pas là la place d'une femme. Je lui ai répondu que si j'y étais venue, c'était parce que j'y avais affaire."*[112]

Such a statement is interesting in at least two ways. Firstly, it shows that despite the hierarchy, women workers did not hesitate to respond to superiors' comments when they felt offended, which goes against the traditional idea of women being submissive. Secondly, it shows that

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[108] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1911, p. 5

[109] Extract from Article 114 of Règlements généraux de l'Instruction sur le service des manufactures, quoted by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquart in *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 100.

[110] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1896, p. 5.

[111] The work in these workshops were usually performed by men.

[112] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1899, p. 1.

behind the interdiction of going from one workshop to the other there was the wish of the management to regulate the relationship female workers should have with their male counterparts, therefore to control once again women's morality, but this time within the work place. Yet, what was to be regarded as *moral* differed according to management and workers in the sense that the latter regarded the control of their so called morality as a lack of confidence or an attack on their dignity, and were more concerned with decency within the factories:

> *"Quand on travaille dans les établissements occupant des ouvriers des deux sexes, où l'on se coudoie tous les jours, on s'habitue ensemble, on peut bien prendre quelques petites libertés sans se manquer de respect et ne faire aucun mal."*[113]
> *"Il nous arrive quelquefois de plaisanter avec les hommes, et cependant, je me crois honnête femme."*[114]
> *"Les cabinets d'aisance sont placés de telle sorte que l'on peut voir à l'intérieur, et à certains moments surtout, les femmes sont fort gênées lorsqu'elles ont à y aller. C'est tout simplement immoral. Et cela se passe à l'État."*[115]

Women were not only controlled in their moves, but also in their speech. In former times, workers were not allowed to talk during working times. They eventually obtained the permission to talk as long as the order was not disturbed. In the Pantin factory in March 1893, two women got an eight day suspension for "*tapages scandaleux dans les ateliers*"[116]. However, what was considered as order was left entirely to the good will of supervisors or engineers, and this often gave workers reasons to complain. For instance, in October 1897, one could read in L'Écho des tabacs the case of an engineer:

> *"Il ne peut pas comprendre que les ouvrières ne puissent pas rester dix heures sans se causer, et surtout, défense absolue de causer aux ouvriers, même avec son mari."*[117]

This statement not only shows that official regulations were not always respected, but also that women's right to speak had to be regulated in order to control, once again, their behaviour with men.

In addition, workers were not allowed to smoke, drink or eat in the workshops, mainly to make sure that they would not damage the tobacco. They also had to be searched and any attempt to steal tobacco was punished with dismissal. Originally, every worker was searched every day, but in 1900 the frequency was reduced to random searches four or five times a

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[113] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1899, p. 2.
[114] Ibid., p. 2.
[115] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1895, p. 3.
[116] Mentioned by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquart in *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 101.
[117] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1897, p. 2.

month. They were also forbidden to sell anything, to bet, to collect money within the factory, to put up posters or to sell papers, which obviously had some consequences for trade union activities. For instance, in 1893, a worker was suspended for three days after selling the union paper, despite the fact that he argued that he had sold it only to union members and subscribers[118].

According to various articles in L'Écho des tabacs, most workers regarded the above regulations as too strict and constantly complained about them:

> *"Puisque maintenant les ouvrières n'ont le droit de passer d'un atelier à l'autre, de se parler dans les ateliers et même sur les carrés, de descendre du troisième pour aller au cabinet du second, que l'on nous mette une chaîne à notre place et un bâillon, et alors, ce ne sera plus une manu, ce sera une maison de correction."*[119]

Numerous examples have shown that tobacco workers were not afraid of disregarding regulations when they regarded them as too strict or unfair. They constantly tried to lighten them, and they succeeded in some cases, as shown in the case of the time of entry. Yet, as a whole, regulations remained a subject of complaint throughout the period.

Sanctions were another matter of concern for tobacco workers. Any act of disobedience was punished, but dismissals remained rare. The most common motives for punishment were disciplinary faults and defects. The most common form of punishment was suspension without pay, for a day or more according to the offence. In any case, no fine could be taken from workers' wages. As a whole, workers seem to have suffered from what they regarded as unfair decisions. L'Écho des tabacs is full of examples of complaints on this matter. For instance, in December 1895, a woman was suspended after being caught reading a paper, while her supervisor was doing exactly the same[120]. In May 1898, another was punished for going to the toilets during pay time [121]. In February 1899, another got a ten day suspension for accusing her supervisor of stealing cigars[122].

This last example demonstrates the need to consider the relationship between women workers and their supervisors. All the above regulations were indeed coupled with a strong hierarchy. As workers were under the direct authority of supervisors, this relationship was based on obedience and submission. The majority of supervisors being ex-workers, they were often regarded as traitors to the working class; not only they were chosen by the management, but

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[118] Mentioned by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquart in *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 101.
[119] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1898, p. 4.
[120] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1895, p. 2.
[121] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1898, p. 4.
[122] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1899, p. 2.

they also represented the link between workers and management in the implementation of regulations. According to L'Écho des tabacs, this position sometimes led to different types of abuse of authority. In November 1897, two interested examples were mentioned by the union in Le Mans. Firstly, the case of Mr Page, whose wife owned a shop, was described as follows:

> *"Les ouvrières qui vont acheter chez Mme Page sont les mieux vues de son mari, elles jouissent des meilleurs avantages, obtiennent des permissions tant qu'elles en veulent, viennent travailler quand cela leur fait plaisir."*[123]

Secondly, the case of Mr Édouard, who made indecent proposals to some workers, was commented on in these terms:

> *"Elles n'osèrent se plaindre car on ne les aurait pas crues tellement elles avaient peur de son influence. Elles se bornèrent seulement à demander leur changement d'atelier pour échapper à ce triste sire (...) Il n'a pas le droit de se servir de son autorité ni de son influence (...) pour retirer le pain de la bouche à des ouvrières qui (...) n'ont pas voulu entendre ses passions."*[124]

The first example shows a particular lack of respect to women in terms of abuse of authority, while the second one is closer to sexual abuse. Yet, they both refer to women as inferiors in terms of hierarchy and gender. This inferiority was not only reflected in supervisors' actions, but also in the way they addressed women. They could be despised because of their physical weakness: *"Si vous étiez un homme, je vous flanquerais un coup de poing sur la tête"*[125]; or reduced to the rank of animals:

> *"Il commence à dire: vous avez un langage et une tenue dégoûtante, avec vos âneries. Vous criez comme des oies. Ou bien pour se distinguer, il dit: vous beuglez comme des veaux."*[126]

They could also be criticised as being second-class workers or of bad morality:

> *"Un chef de service un jour de carnaval, a bien reproché aux dames travaillant sous ses ordres, de travailler déplorablement pour cause de noce carnavalesque. A une autre, dont le grand tort était d'avoir choisi un compagnon d'existence sans l'assentiment du prêtre ni du maire, un chef de service reprocha de vivre de deux métiers... Je laisse à penser ce que cet individu entendait dire quant au second de ces métiers."*[127]

In addition to the information they provide on supervisors' attitudes, the above statements are useful to assess the way women perceived their supervisors. They expected to be respected by them, but because they were not , they did not respect them either. As the latter were in direct contact with the workforce, they were usually the first targets as well. Yet, as will be seen

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[123] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1897, p. 4.
[124] Ibid.
[125] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1898, p. 4.
[126] Quoted by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard in *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 104.
[127] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, Paris, Imprimerie Perréal, 1894, p. 27.

later in the course of this study, women's expectations went beyond the lowest hierarchical grade; their search for consideration could actually take a variety of forms.

Despite the attitude of certain supervisors, it would be unfair to say that this desire for mutual respect could not be found on the management's side at all, in words at least, if not in practice. One striking example is the declaration the *Ministre des finances* made in front of the *Chambre* in March 1895 about the strike which had just occurred in February at the Dijon factory:

> *"La grève terminée (...), j'ai examiné les faits avec la plus grande impartialité, et autant j'exigerai toujours que la discipline soit maintenue et que l'autorité soit respectée, autant je demanderai également aux directeurs de ne pas oublier que les ouvrières et les ouvriers employés dans nos ateliers doivent avoir les mêmes sentiments de susceptibilité et de dignité que nous apportons tous dans notre vie. L'autorité ne peut que gagner à ce qu'il y ait ce respect mutuel.... J'ai cru, en accomplissant mon devoir (...) avoir plus fait pour l'autorité dans ce qu'elle a de légitime et de bon, qu'en opposant une fin de non recevoir à des réclamations qui étaient légitimes."*[128]

Such a statement reintroduces the notion of legitimate authority the state had on its workers, which in turn legitimated the strictness of the regulations. However, as Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard pointed out, this strictness was not only due to the need to be respected:

> *"La minutie du règlement, le désir de ses auteurs d'envisager toutes les situations possibles s'expliquent à la fois, par le fait que le patron est l'État, donc se doit d'être un modèle, et par le fait que la main d'oeuvre est féminine. Cette main d'oeuvre est considérée comme peu à sa place à l'usine, mal intégrée au monde du travail, donc elle doit être plus strictement encadrée que la main d'oeuvre masculine (à l'intérieur de l'établissement comme à l'extérieur)."*[129]

It could be argued that the last idea developed in the above quotation goes against what was previously said about the consequences the state provisions had on the way women workers perceived themselves: the state regarded them as poorly integrated in the working world but at the same time provided them with means to make them feel part of the factory from their early age. However, when referring to either provisions or regulations a difference has to be made between the purpose of the state and the workers' expectations. In the case of provisions, on the one hand, the state wanted to play the role of the father who is determined to protect his children, not only because he is convinced that they are incapable of protecting themselves, but also because protecting them is a way, if not an excuse, of keeping a certain control over their lives. In return for his protective attitude, he expects his children to be

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[128] Quoted by Marie-Victoire Louis in Le Droit de cuissage, Paris, Éditions ouvrières, 1994, p. 264.
[129] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 104.

grateful, therefore faithful to him. On the other hand, the children tend to take this protection for granted, therefore normal, and develop their own perception accordingly: they do not perceive this protection as the result of the fact they are regarded as children, but as a norm from which they can benefit. Thus the state provided facilities to protect and control its female workers, whom it considered firstly as women, therefore as minors, weak and inferior, whereas women perceived these provisions as the acknowledgement of their status as workers. In the case of regulations, however, although the purpose of the state remained the same, the women's response differed because they could not benefit from excessively strict rules. Therefore, they developed a sense of rebellion against the paternalistic order and came to criticise the excess of authority as a abuse of power.

In comparison with the tobacco industry, the amount of information found in relation to work regulations in the hat industry was very limited. Only L'Ouvrier chapelier provided details on this matter from time to time. What follows is therefore a summary of the few aspects mentioned in this federative paper.

In terms of recruitment, religious affiliations could be as important as skills or age in some companies. L'Ouvrier chapelier mentioned two companies where the workers had to be Catholics to get employment: *Mégemond* in Bord in 1900[130] and the *Société Parisienne* in Paris in 1914[131]. Religion could also be part of the factory life in certain cases:

> *"Nous ne voulons pas de votre femme dans notre usine parce qu'elle est protestante et que, comme toutes nos ouvrières, elle n'a jamais voulu assister à la prière qui se dit tous les matins et à la messe du dimanche dans la chapelle de l'usine."*[132]

The opening and closing of workshops varied from one company to the other. The *Garrouste* factory in Châlabre would open its doors at 7 a.m. and close them again five minutes later[133], whereas the *Léwis* company in Paris started at 9 a.m. In some cases, being late meant losing the whole day, as was the case in the last company above[134], but the sanction could go even further: workers who were late at the *Provost* factory in Chazelles were suspended for two days[135]. Furthermore, workers were not always allowed to leave the factory at lunch time: it

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[130] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 12 October 1900, p. 2.
[131] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 February 1914, p. 2.
[132] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 12 October 1900, p. 2.
[133] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 November 1900, p. 3.
[134] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 May 1914, p. 2.
[135] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 17 December 1893, p. 2.

was mandatory for the workers of the *Léwis* factory to eat the meal provided by the company[136].

The main regulations aimed at controlling the workers' behaviour in relation to their rights, or rather lack of them, to consume and communicate. For instance, hatters were forbidden to eat or go and get some water in the *Provost* factory in 1893, or to consume alcohol , except wine, within the *Garrouste* premises in 1900. In terms of communication and relation with others, women working in the *Léwis* workshops were not allowed to joke or even smile, as attested in the following comment:

> *"Petit à petit on retire aux ouvrières le droit d'être gaies et on veut les changer en machines, sans esprit et sans sentiments."*[137]

In addition, numerous companies, such as the *Provost* or *Société Parisienne*, forbade workers to speak loudly or to sing.

It would be impossible to establish a fair comparison with the tobacco industry with such limited information. Because of the variety of companies with their own regulations, hatters were treated completely differently from one factory or workshop to another. They had no bench-marks to know what to consider as normal or not when comparing themselves with other hatters. This is why it could be argued that comparing them with workers from other industries in terms of regulations would be even more hazardous. However, some common points regarded women could be noticed in both industries.

Firstly, some regulations were directly related to the fact that the morality of female workers should be preserved. Thus the *Garrouste* business ordered supervisors to prevent obscene discourses or songs and added:

> *"Il est expressément défendu de chercher querelle et de tenir des propos déplacés vis à vis les ouvrières et réciproquement."*[138]

In turn, women expected to be respected as such. A milliner from the *Bataille* company in Paris was refused payment for an item by her boss in these terms :

> *"Partez d'ici et que je ne vous revoie plus, sinon, je vous mets mon pied dans le c..!"*[139]

Another milliner responded to this by giving the following comment:

> *"Mr. Bataille, vous n'êtes qu'un (...) goujat (...). On doit être poli avec son semblable, surtout avec une femme."*[140]

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[136] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 May 1914, p. 2.
[137] Ibid.
[138] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 November 1900, p. 3.
[139] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 March 1914, p. 2.
[140] Ibid.

This example not only shows that some women hatters expected to be treated with respect, but also that some male superiors despised them, as was the case in the tobacco industry. However, this spite could also be found in female supervisors, which made this abuse of power even more meaningful in the sense that it had nothing to do with the power of one gender on another; L'Ouvrier chapelier mentions the case of a company in Nancy where a female supervisor forbade the workers under her supervision to speak too loudly:

> *"Si le silence est absolu pour les ouvrières, il ne l'est pas pour cette contremaîtresse, qui va même jusqu'à insulter les ouvrières soumises à son autorité, et les prive de travail suivant ses caprices."*[141]

It is a shame that employers' views on the matter could not be examined for the hat industry, but it could be argued that the meaning of authority in relation to respect would mean the same for most employers whatever the sector in which they worked. As a whole, it could be said that the relationship between regulations and female workers were rather similar in both industries in the sense that dignity and respect were both issues women felt strongly about. However, as will be seen later in this study, although women from both industries had similar reasons to complain, their ways in dealing with them differed. The single fact that women were in the majority in unions in the tobacco industry is enough to exemplify this difference. Its shows that these women were dissatisfied and meant to do something about it to counterbalance the disrespect of their dignity in the workplace. In contrast, the lack of involvement of women hatters could be regarded as a sign of submission to authority, but, as will be seen later, this apparent acceptance of their fate was not necessarily a deliberate choice.

The characteristics of the workforce

The examination of the characteristics of the tobacco and hat industries has shown that tobacco workers benefited from better conditions as a whole. The term privilege could even be used when compared with the hatters' situation. It cannot be denied that the fact that the former were state workers greatly contributed to this state of affairs. Yet, if the difference in women's union membership is to be explained in relation to the industries to which they belonged, the characteristics of the workforce in these industries must also be examined.

In terms of the working population in the tobacco industry, the most striking feature is the predominance of women workers. Women constituted 90.99% of the workforce (excluding clerical workers) in this industry in 1890. However, this proportion progressively decreased

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[141] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 March 1906, p. 3.

until 1914: 90.44% in 1900 and 86.19% in 1913 (See appendices 1.6 to 1.9). Yet, this decrease, as well as the variations in the number of women from one year to another, did not necessarily mean that the tobacco industry as such, that is to say the actual making of products, was in the process of being made masculine. These developments were mostly due to the progressive mechanisation of certain aspects of production[142] and to the recruitment policies adopted throughout the period: the number of female workers constantly decreased from May 1885 to July 1893, as the direct result of the decision of the Central Administration to stop and then resume recruitment to regulate production. The same phenomenon occurred between 1894 and 1898, as well as between 1901 and 1905. Therefore, the variations must not be taken as the sign of a crisis leading to redundancies, but rather as the outcome of a standstill in recruitment; those who left were simply not replaced for a while. Only women workers were generally affected by these decisions, in so far as they only were directly involved in the actual production of cigars, cigarettes and tobacco.

Apart from general maintenance and handling, factories were divided into five different sections: the basic preparation of the different varieties of tobacco; the production of snuff; the production of plugs (chewing tobacco); the production of scaferlati and cigarettes and the production of cigars. In 1900, the proportion of women in these respective sections was: 18 % in maintenance and handling, 89.55% in the first section, 94.11% in the second, 78.94% in the third, 86.38% in the fourth, and 99.32% in the last category[143]. In addition, it must be borne in mind that women cigar makers constituted about 54% of the female workforce at the time (68% if including women in charge of wrapping the outer leaf and packaging)[144]. These figures show an extreme gender division of labour in the tobacco factories: women were responsible for the production, men for the maintenance. Therefore, it could be said that in this industry, women were the main actors in the production process, whereas men were given secondary tasks (See appendix 1.10). An American doctor visiting the factory in Issy les Moulineaux noticed the same pattern in 1909:

> *"The men (200) are employed largely to do the heavy work, while most of the skilled work in turning out cigars and cigarettes is done by the women (1200). The superintendent informed me that the women are more dextrous in the use of their fingers than the men, and hence are given the preference for this kind of work."*[145]

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[142] For further details on the progressive mechanisation of the tobacco industry, see: SEITA, Le Monopole des tabacs en France, op. cit., pp. 23-27.

[143] These proportions have been calculated using figures given in Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 23.

[144] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, *"Les ouvrières d'État"*, op. cit., p. 93.

[145] Francis Dowling, The French Government Tobacco Factory at Issy, near Paris, Chicago, American Medical

This corresponded to the idea that women should perform skilled tasks according to their so called feminine nature, while men were in charge of task demanding physical strength. It must be noticed that even women did not call into question this kind of gender division of labour and rather encouraged it. Mme Sarzier made this clear at the eight congress of the federation:

> *"Plus nous ferons rentrer les hommes dans les manufactures, mieux cela vaudra; il y a assez de travaux doux pour les femmes et nous devons laisser assez de travaux durs pour les hommes."*[146]

In this context, the task of packaging is an interesting example. The latter was usually performed by women but was thought to be too difficult for them. Throughout the period, unions failed to get them replaced by men. Instead, they demanded the introduction of the Belot machine to make this task easier[147]. Not only does this show that workers accepted the criteria according to which the gender division was made, but also that they did not regard the use of machines as a problem in this industry dominated by a female workforce. Yet, it must be said that mechanisation was not yet well established in the industry, according to the following statement from the early 1900s:

> *"Plusieurs machines à cigarettes nouvelles, récemment expérimentées dans quelques manufactures, ont un rendement tel qu'il paraît dès à présent certain qu'elles suffiront aux besoins, tout en permettant de diminuer le nombre des ouvrières. En revanche, les essais faits jusqu'ici en vue de la fabrication industrielle des cigares au moyen de machines sont restés infructueux. La confection, étant toute entière manuelle, ne dépend, dans son ensemble, que du nombre des cigarières."*[148]

The proportion of women was also extremely high in the hat industry (See appendices 1.7 to 1.9 and 1.11). In 1896, according to the census, the hat industry numbered a working population of 70 058 people, including 45 000 milliners who were mostly women. As a whole, it included not less than 54 840 women, that is to say 78.27%. Out of 33 124 workers in businesses, 22 028 were women, that is to say about 66.50%. This proportion reached 72.80% in 1906, and 78.95% in 1911. These figures show the constant increase in the proportion of women throughout the period. As previously mentioned, the hat industry was therefore just on its way to becoming a feminine industry, unlike the tobacco industry. However, these figures give a false idea in the sense that they conceal not only the differences existing from one branch to another, but also the way women were differently spread in the same branch. According to the various censuses, there were 6 710 women milliners for 100 men in 1896.

Association, 1909, p. 2.

[146] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1900, p. 3.

[147] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1905, p. 8.

[148] Fénelon Gibon, Employées et ouvrières, Paris, Emmanuel Vitte, 1906, p. 91.

Cap making averaged 230 women for 100 men, and straw hat making 131 women. In 1906, the average was 4 670 women milliners for 100 men. Cap making averaged 200 women for 100 men, straw hat making averaged 120, hat garnishing 420[149]. In 1911, there were 97.46 women for 100 men hatters and 26 130 women milliners for 100 men[150]. Although the proportion of women remained high in any branch of the industry, the highest proportion was to be found in those specialised in fashion and women's hats. In other words, according to what was previously said, the highest proportion of women was to be found in the branch where the size of workshops tended to be the smallest. Furthermore, there was an extreme gender division of labour in the same branch. As part of the 1891-1893 enquiry, 26 provincial businesses from the hat industry were considered, among which eight were specialised in the production of straw hats, and 11 in the production of felt hats. When taking the production of felt hats as an example, the most striking feature, at first sight, is the division between male and female occupations: when excluding workers whose occupation was not specified, the only task performed by both women and men were that of fuller, even though the proportion of female fullers (16.66%) reveals that this occupation was actually the privilege of men. The tasks reserved for women were mainly related to preparation (felting) and finish (sanding and garnishing). Therefore the actual making of hats seems to have been a male privilege (See appendices 1.12 and 1.13).

As shown, the tobacco and hat industries were both dominated by a female workforce, but the actual meaning of this domination differed in both cases. On the one hand, the proportion of women tobacco workers was decreasing, as a consequence of recruitment policies, a slow but progressive mechanisation and the decreasing demand for cigars which were traditionally their domain. However, despite this decrease, the domination of women had been accepted as a fact for decades and was to be found in the division of labour: women were entrusted to perform the main tasks in the production process. On the other hand, the proportion of women hatters was in the increase but their role in the production process remained secondary; male, skilled workers were not prepared to accept their domination. The production of cigars and cigarettes, which were mainly smoked by men, was an established female prerogative; the production of hats a male privilege which had to remain as such.

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[149] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement général de la population effectué le 4 mars 1906, Vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

[150] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement général de la population effectué le 5 mars 1911, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1913, p. 25.

Now that the proportion of women has been examined in both industries, it must be shown whether this proportion differed according to age, marital status and skills, these three elements being very useful to complement what has already been said on their perception of work. The 1896 census indicates that among the women employed in state industries only 9.44% were under 25, as opposed to 58% in the hat industry. No less than 60.80% of the women employed in the tobacco industry were married, against 25.14 % in the hat industry[151]. In 1901, out of the 12 477 women tobacco workers whose situation was known, only 1 808, or 14.49%, were under 25. The vast majority, or 61.64%, of women were married. There were 5 895 women workers in the first category of the hat industry (felt, silk, plush and woollen hat industries). Out of 5 883 whose situation was known, 2 632 (44.73%) were under 25. Out of 15 992 women workers working in the fashion branch of the hat industry, whose situation was known, 11 931 (74. 60%) were under 25. In the third category (straw hat making), there were 2 543 women workers. Out of 2 535 whose situation was known, 1 162 (45.83%) were under 25. Most of female hatters, whose status was known, were single, whatever the category they belonged to: out of the 5 764 women from the first category, only 38.80% were married. This proportion was respectively 10% and 39% in the other two categories[152]. In 1906, 9.15% of tobacco women workers were under 25. In the hat industry, this proportion was respectively , 44.49% in the first category, 75.61% in the second category and 41.34% in the third one. No less than 61.74% of the women employed in state industries were married, as opposed to 21.24% in the category including hatters[153].

All the above figures demonstrate that, on average, women tobacco workers were older and much more often married than hatters. It is a shame that the censuses did not provide the number of children these women had; such information would have been useful to comprehend the kind of life style these women had. However, it could be assumed that because women hatters tended to be single and young, they were more likely to regard their trade as a phase before getting married and having children. It could also be argued that married women were more likely to have children, therefore more likely to have family responsibilities, therefore less time to be devoted to extra activities outside work. Yet, the fact that female tobacco workers were older than hatters could also imply that they tended to regard their work and their status

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[151] Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Résultats statistiques du recencement des industries et professions, Dénombrement général de la population du 29 mars 1896, Vol. 4, op. cit., pp. 206-257.

[152] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement de la population effectué le 24 mars 1901, Vol. 4, op. cit.

[153] Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recencement général de la population effectué le 4 mars 1906, Vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 18, 159.

as workers as a permanent characteristic of their life. Therefore, they regarded their job differently when compared not only to hatters, but also to female workers in general.

This difference went even further when considering their skills. As a result of the relative lack of mechanisation in the tobacco industry, women tobacco workers were indeed still relatively skilled factory workers. According to Charles Mannheim, the preparatory tasks, as well as the production of snuff and plugs, did not demand any particular training. Only a week's training was necessary to pack the scaferlati, but the average productivity was not reached until after three months of practice. The training necessary to make cigarettes depended on the way they were made: in workshops where the production was mechanised, a month was enough, but a period of three months was more appropriate to learn how to make cigarettes manually. The making of cigars was the most difficult task to learn since it was still mainly performed by hand: on average a worker would not reach her full productive capacity until after two years of practice[154]. Consequently, because of their particular skills and training, cigar makers, who constituted about half of the female workforce, could not be easily replaced, which in turn implied that they could not easily find employment elsewhere either. This could explain, to a certain extent, their attachment to their work.

Although it was difficult to find documentation on the way hatters were trained, L'Ouvrier chapelier provided useful information on the impact of mechanisation. It seems that the mechanisation of the industry, which progressively led to its industrialisation, caused serious concern in the sense that it brought massive numbers of unskilled workers unfamiliar with the trade and its tradition and concentrated in big factories:

> *"Jusqu'en 1900, notre Société était constituée uniquement par les feutriers; devant le machinisme, les ouvriers qualifiés disparurent par extinction et élimination; avec eux disparut l'esprit d'organisation professionnelle qui imprégnait les vieux ouvriers; ils furent remplacés par un contingent chaque fois grossi de non-professionnels sans tradition corporative ni syndicale."*[155]

Considering the increasing number of women in the trade, it could be said that the presence of women greatly contributed to the "extinction and elimination" of skilled workers from the hat industry. In March 1910 for instance, it could be read in L'Ouvrier chapelier:

> *"Comme la femme et l'enfant sont entrés à l'atelier, à l'usine, parce que le travail devenu plus facile n'exigeait pas les connaissances techniques*

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[154] See:
Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 26-40.
Claude Réal, op. cit., pp. 139-149.

[155] This statement by Pierre Milan, made at the 1919 national workers' congress, was quoted in Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 243.

nécessaires autrefois, il en résulta que le patronat les employa pour un salaire dérisoire."[156]

This created serious tension from time to time. Thus, in 1893, some furriers from Paris went on strike to demand the expulsion of women who had replaced men[157]. In 1906, 62 cap makers went on strike for 87 days against the introduction of machines manipulated by women. The employment of women seem therefore to have been considered as one of the main factors in the deskilling and devaluation of the trade, mainly because their employment was the direct result of this mechanisation. However, once again, it would seem to easy to assert that male workers were the only victims of mechanisation. For instance, L'Ouvrier chapelier mentions the case of 50 women in Bourg de Péage who lost their jobs after the introduction of machines making cloches[158].

In male workers' minds, mechanisation tended to be associated with feminisation and the deskilling of skilled trades: because the work was made easier, women could be put in direct competition with men. However, according to the examples provided by the hat and tobacco industries, a difference must be made between industries whose feminisation is in progress and industries with a well established and accepted majority of women. In the 1890s, the hatters were witnessing the feminization of their trade, whereas the predominance of women was well established in the tobacco industry. In the first instance mechanisation was accused of leading to feminisation, in the second instance, feminisation was accepted as a justification for mechanisation. Thus, the former still regarded women as a threat to their trade and machines as a threat to their skilled position, whereas the latter saw mechanisation as the best resort to make work easier for its female workforce. This shows that in a skilled industry with a masculine tradition machines were regarded as an evil, but in a skilled industry with a feminine tradition the notion of easiness was given priority to the detriment of the notion of skill.

Conclusion

The main characteristics of the industries and their workforce have now been examined. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, it is believed that these played an important part in the relationship between women industrial workers and trade unionism. They have therefore to be put in parallel with the reasons generally given to explain female union membership and

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[156] L'Ouvrier chapelier, February-March 1910, p. 3.
[157] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 26 March 1893, pp. 3-4.
[158] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 10 April 1892, p. 2.

militancy, or rather the lack of it, in order to establish a link and see if the assumption made is relevant in the case of the two industries under scrutiny.

Various reasons have been enumerated to explain why women tended not to join unions. However, before giving them, it seems important to make the difference between reasons due to women and their conditions as workers, such as material and psychological reasons, and reasons due to external impediments created by the environment in which they evolved, such as male behaviour and the law. It is probably wise to say that women were "refractory", but it must also be considered that they were not encouraged to be otherwise. It is believed that the first category of reasons are directly related to the industrial and economic characteristics mentioned above, whereas the second category is more related to the characteristics of unions, union members and society as a whole, therefore to what will be studied in the second chapter of this study. That is why it seems more appropriate to examine only the former in this section and leave the latter for later.

The first most common reason to explain the low level of participation of female workers in unions was given with reference to their so-called docility and passivity, but the fact that women could form the majority of unions in the tobacco industry for instance makes such a reason insufficient if not irrelevant. The study of tobacco workers has indeed shown many cases of active and rebellious behaviour, which goes against this original assumption. Therefore the explanation of the difference between tobacco workers and hatters must be found somewhere else.

With regards to the type of industry, it must be considered in what ways the fact that tobacco workers were state workers producing for a monopoly could favour their unionisation, as opposed to hatters working privately. It has been shown that the state wished to present itself as a model employer. As will be demonstrated in the second chapter, tobacco workers, in turn, expected the state to stand as an example to other employers in the treatment of its workforce. Provided that this employer was the one to make trade unions legal, it could be expected that, without necessarily encouraging the unionisation of its workers, it would not be opposed to it.

As Marie-Louise Compain put it:

> *"Le patron-État ne saurait trouver mauvais que son personnel fasse usage du droit syndical conféré par la loi."*[159]

Without saying that the state did make it easy for tobacco workers to join unions, these workers could at least use the argument that the state should make it easy to justify their

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[159] Marie-Louise Compain, op. cit., p. 38.

unionisation, as opposed to hatters who were left to the good will of their employers, whose behaviour could not always be controlled. As previously seen, women workers were put under extra pressure because of their gender, but because the state would have lost any credit in preventing them from joining unions, it could be argued that the pressure put on them in terms of unionisation was minor compared to that of workers from the private sector who frequently had to face extra blackmail and threats on their way to unionisation[160].

As seen, the monopoly had some consequences on the concentration and size of businesses; tobacco workers tended to be concentrated in big industrial factories, whereas hatters most frequently worked in small workshops, when not in complete isolation. It could be assumed that these differences played a major role in female unionisation in at least three ways. First of all, as mentioned by Caroline Milhaud in her 1907 study L'Ouvrière en France, the fact that women often worked at home or together in small workshops did not facilitate their organisation in the sense that they could only appreciate and understand the full benefits of getting organised in big industries where they worked together with men, the latter being able to educate them and open their minds to trade unionism[161]. However, this education could only be done by men who would be ready to educate, therefore to consider women as worth being educated, which was probably the case in the tobacco industry where women were not regarded as competitors but rather as fellow workers. In addition, André de Maday considered that it was easier for tobacco workers to join unions because they did not work from home and therefore could benefit from legal protection[162]. Lastly, as acknowledged by Marie-Louise Compain, because women tobacco workers worked in big plants, they worked together, knew each other and had the same interests[163]. Tobacco workers themselves were well aware of this advantage, as shown in their 1894 congress report for instance:

> *"Si une corporation a un avantage immense à se fédérer nationalement, c'est bien celle des travailleurs des tabacs qui peuvent porter leurs revendications devant l'administration générale et les pouvoirs publics, et qui ont ainsi la possibilité de centraliser leur action et de voir la même mesure appliquée, d'un seul coup, à toutes les manufactures et à tous les travailleurs des tabacs."*[164]

On the contrary, hatters, and especially cap makers, understood their disadvantage by noticing that the majority of non-unionised workers were to be found among those working from home

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[160] For further information regarding this argument, see Chapter 2, pp 85-88.
[161] Caroline Milhaud, op. cit., p. 96.
[162] André de Maday, op. cit., p. 195.
[163] Marie-Louise Compain, op. cit., p. 38.
[164] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, Paris, Imprimerie Perréal, 1894, p. 231.

and in workshops employing mostly women[165]. This link between concentration of workers and unionisation certainly had a great impact on women tobacco workers in the sense that it probably gave them the feeling of power usually felt in united mass movements; if they were to be thought weak because of their gender, their number might counterbalance this weakness. On the other hand, because of the nature of their trade, female hatters were deprived of this feeling of unity; their struggle, if they decided to join unions, remained the struggle of individuals faced with a multiplicity of particular claims and employers. Furthermore, milliners were those with the higher proportion of women working from home and, as will be seen in chapter 3, there were also those who were the most reluctant to unionise. Thus, once again, there seems to have a direct link between concentration and organisation.

In terms of wages, the fact that women tobacco workers were comparatively well paid could also favour their unionisation. Considering women's generally lower wages compared to men, it was commonly thought that they could not always afford to pay unions subscriptions[166]. It is known that female tobacco workers tended to get more than the national average, and hatters less. Therefore, it could be assumed that financially speaking, membership put less strain on tobacco workers ' budget. Furthermore, it has been seen that in the tobacco industry women from the same town, therefore the same factory, were guaranteed the same basic rate if they performed the same task. In contrast, women from the hat industry working in the same area, but not for the same employer, did not necessarily get the same wages, therefore they could suffer from competition, which in turn could have an effect on the way they perceived other female hatters. Competition within the same trade among workers from the same gender living in the same locality, but not working in the same company, was more likely to create jealousy and disunity than favour unionisation. In addition, the fact that tobacco workers were paid relatively more could have an impact on the way they perceived their work and identified themselves as workers; with their work being less depreciated through wages, they probably felt more accepted as workers, therefore more likely to be interested in unions as a means of dealing with their concerns.

It was also commonly believed that working women lacked time and energy to get involved in unions, attending meetings not being always compatible with housework and child care. This

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[165] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Quinzième congrès national, tenu à Bort, du 22 au 27 juillet 1912, op. cit., p. 61.

[166] See, for instance:
Mme Jean Brunhes, *"Le mouvement syndical féminin"*, La Réforme sociale, June 1905, p. 866.
Caroline Milhaud, op. cit., p. 96.

reason is undeniable when considering the multiple citations of the double working day for women in both federative papers. It has been shown that working hours were shorter for tobacco workers than for hatters, so it could be argued that they had more time to devote to trade union matters if they wished to do so. Of course, it could also be argued that women hatters had actually more time in the sense that they tended to undergo longer periods of unemployment, but it must be borne in mind that unions at the time were not really concerned with unemployed people as such; they tried to prevent unemployment rather than helping workers once they were unemployed. For instance, out of 92 unions listed in the appendix of the 1892 hatters' congress report, only 13 provided unemployment benefits. Therefore, in terms of time, it is rather unlikely that unemployed female hatters would consider their time as an opportunity to get involved in union activity if unions were not to provide them with some kind of support. Consequently, it appears wise to assume that the unionisation of tobacco workers could have been made easier by the fact that they had generally and comparatively more time to spend outside work, while still being in employment.

Unemployment among hatters had another consequence in the sense that, as mentioned before, they were rarely full time hatters and had to complement their income with other jobs. In the case of female hatters, this was coupled with the fact that they were in the majority single and young, therefore it could be assumed that they tended to give up their job when getting married. Thus, as workers, they were part-time hatters, as women, they were temporary workers. In contrast, it has been shown that tobacco workers were unfamiliar with unemployment as such, and that they were mainly married and comparatively older than female hatters. It could be argued that they did not see their work as a transitory phase in their life as women. This idea is obviously to be linked to what was previously said regarding the effects of state provisions on the way women tobacco workers saw themselves as workers. It was assumed that women in general were ignorant of economic and social problems, therefore that they could not understand the purpose of trade unionism when the latter did not bring immediate benefits. However, tobacco workers probably had more interest (both in terms of being interested and having something to gain) than the majority of women in joining unions, because they could envisage improvements in the long term, knowing that they could eventually benefit from them. Their skills, like the length of their function as producers, also determined and justified the usefulness of unionisation. The fact that female hatters were accused of deskilling the trade would suggest that the majority of them were likely to be

unskilled or regarded as less skilled by the majority of male hatters, therefore easily replaceable, therefore reluctant to join unions so as not to jeopardise their job at a time when the majority of employers considered unions and trade unionists as a threat, or not interested in trying to get improvements from which they would probably never benefit. In addition, trade unionism in this industry was traditionally the product of skilled workers who practically ignored unskilled workers; according to a report published in 1906, only the Parisian union would admit unskilled workers in its ranks[167].

In contrast, in the tobacco industry, the notion of skill was not a big issue in the relationship between male and female workers simply because the latter were mostly skilled and did not endanger male jobs. Their skills gave them the power to be regarded as proper workers by their male counterparts. They had this additional advantage over female hatters. They also benefited from provisions and conditions which made their identity as proper workers and their wish and ability to preserve this identity probably stronger. It must be borne in mind that trade union organisations originated among skilled, well paid workers, therefore those with an acknowledged, superior status. As Paul Louis put it at the time:

> *"Ce ne sont, nulle part, les travailleurs les plus écrasés, les plus mal rétribués, et les plus mal nourris, qui portent le plus haut leurs revendications et leur idéal social (...). La volonté de l'émancipation suppose déjà un commencement de liberté."*[168]

Historically speaking, it is not those who had the most to complain about who actually complained. It was those with a safer environment and therefore more confidence and hope who did, and in this matter, female tobacco workers were no exception.

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[167] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 November 1906, p. 2.
[168] Paul Louis, Le Syndicalisme contre l'État, Paris, F. Alcan, 1910, p. 180.

CHAPTER TWO:

TRADE UNIONS' ATTITUDES TO WOMEN

One of the aims of this chapter is to go deeper into the assumption that women were generally refractory to trade unionism before 1914. It could be argued that their lack of involvement was related to the inadequacy of the kind of trade unionism that was offered or available to them. If such was the case, women 's absence could be regarded as the rejection of a system or mode of thought to which they could not relate. It is therefore crucial to examine trade unions' attitude to women in detail. Although it is not the purpose of this chapter to treat exhaustively unions' attitudes to women and female workers in general, some preliminary comments on the relationship between trade unionism, women and feminism are indispensable to situate female tobacco workers and hatters in relation to the general background. So far, it has been established that female tobacco workers were much more present in their unions than female hatters[1]. After introducing unionisation in both industries, this chapter will present the general evolution of trade unionism in both industries and will examine whether the difference in women's representation and behaviour could be linked to the form of trade unionism adopted by the tobacco workers' and hatters' federations. Some of the reasons explaining this difference, that is to say those related to both industry and workforce, have been examined in the previous chapter: it has been suggested that it was in some way easier for female tobacco workers to join unions. Yet, the other reasons, those that have been summarised as "external impediments" are still to be studied. These impediments were associated with, firstly, the attitude of male militants faced with women as women, co-workers as well as potential members[2]; secondly, the main claims made by unions and federations in relation to women and, thirdly, the approach chosen by both federations to deal with women. Such an approach could be revealed in the arguments used to attract women to unions as well as in the statutes and regulations of both federations. This is why this chapter will subsequently concentrate on all the above three factors in order to assess and qualify the main differences existing between female tobacco workers and female hatters.

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[1] Actual figures will be given in Chapter 3. See pp. 129-130.

[2] The way women perceived trade unionism will be examined in details in Chapter 3.

General background

Given the way women workers were perceived in society as a whole, their relation towards trade unionism was bound to be complex and ambiguous. If women had been accepted as workers straight away, they probably would have been accepted in unions in the same way. Furthermore, it could be thought that, in principle, workers' unions would oppose the bourgeois concept of the woman and the paternalistic order related to it in much the same way as they rejected the capitalist order that accompanied them. Unfortunately, such was not the case and what follows is an analysis of the extent to which workers adopted bourgeois values in the gender struggle, while accusing feminists of doing the same in relation to the class struggle.

Women's involvement, organisation and militancy could depend on several factors they could not necessarily control. This is why their lack of involvement must be viewed from two different points of view. It could be asked whether their lack of interest was the outcome of segregationist policies and behaviour on the one hand, or the expression of their own lack of interest in questions related to their status as workers. Even so, can someone be accused of disinterest in something which does not meet one's needs? Therefore the central question remains whether women did not get involved because they did not meet the needs of unions or because unions did not meet their needs. However, such questions cannot be answered without the examination of these needs.

In terms of unions needs[3], it seems important to examine whether they came progressively to take women into consideration, which would partly explain the increase in female membership throughout the period. Originally, these needs were strongly identified with the Proudhonian vision of trade unionism[4]. Trade unionism originated amongst skilled workers of the male sex and the ideas of Proudhon were important for these workers and the way they regarded their trade[5]. Yet, according to Proudhon, women were naturally and physically inferior, therefore they had to depend on men for their existence. Thus ending up as housewives or harlots was their only alternative. Good women were to devote their life to their spouse, their household and procreation. Consequently, any working woman was to be regarded as a thief stealing work from a man and any idea of equal pay for equal work was out of the question. Such

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[3] Although women's needs and expectations in relation to work and trade unionism will be mentioned on several occasions in this chapter, they will be examined in more depth in Chapter 3.

[4] For further details on Proudhon's ideas, see in particular: Michel Winock, Le Socialisme en France et en Europe, Paris, Seuil, 1992, pp. 47-51.

[5] See in particular: Jean Maitron, *"La personnalité du militant ouvrier français dans la seconde moitié du XIX^ème siècle"*, Le Mouvement social, 33-34, October 1960- March 1961, pp. 67-86.

views, associated with the acute competition between men and women on the labour market, were to be the basis of unions' policies and male attitudes for years, at least till the early years of the twentieth century.

The CGT and women

In this context, the newly born CGT, the most important organisation to represent the interests of workers before 1914, was the means by which ideas were to be commonly expressed, developed and implemented. As shown in the various workers' and CGT congress reports of the period, the problem caused by the presence of women on the job market was a relatively serious issue since it was put on the agenda three times, in 1892 (*"Women and girls in industry and commerce"*[6]), in 1894 (*"The exploitation of women"*[7]) and in 1898 (*"The work of women in industry"*[8]). It was also mentioned or debated at seven other congresses (1893, 1897, 1900, 1904, 1908, 1910 and 1912). Women at work was therefore a recurrent topic, but was a matter mainly discussed by men when it represented a threat to them as workers. In 1892, the aim was to oppose the work of women in industry. They were to be temporarily accepted, provided that they were paid the same as men. The congress also asked for specific protective legislation for women (See appendix 2.1). The argument of equal pay for equal work was also used two years later, but for a different purpose this time: in 1892 it was to reduce the competition and thus the fall in men's wages, in 1894, it was used to promote equality between genders. Yet, the notion of equality was kept ambiguous (consciously or unconsciously) and often led to paradoxical statements. Thus, after denouncing, once again, women's work as a social evil causing depopulation and the disorganisation of the family, the 1894 congress report stated:

> *"Le remède nous parait être dans l'égalité que l'homme et la femme doivent avoir dans la société; cette égalité vraie et possible consiste dans l'équivalence des fonctions sociales de l'homme et de la femme. A travail égal, salaire égal. Là seulement la femme comprendra son rôle dans la société moderne."*[9]

The 1894 congress was important for another reason: for the first time, interventions related to the need to organise women and encourage their membership. In 1898, two points of views were reflected: those who wanted to suppress industrial work for women, and those who

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[6] Out of six issues debated during this congress.
[7] Out of ten issues debated during this congress.
[8] Out of twenty issues debated during this congress.
[9] Sixième congrès national des syndicats de France. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, tenu à Nantes du 17 au 22 septembre 1894, Nantes, Imprimerie Schwob et fils, 1894, p. 80.

thought it better to organise them; but the final resolution still pointed out that women should remain at home (See appendix 2.2). According to Madeleine Guilbert[10], 1900 opened a new era: from then onwards, no resolution condemned industrial work for women and no prolonged arguments took place on the problem caused by the presence of women on the job market (See appendix 2.3). According to these reports, by 1914, women seemed to be accepted, at least in theory. But these reports did not indicate that the CGT tried to elaborate a concrete programme to face the problems met by the female workforce.

The above summary reveals two important factors in the understanding of the way women workers were dealt with, firstly, in terms of their right to work and, secondly, in terms of their organisation. It seems important to go a bit further in the analysis of these two aspects in so far as the proposals made in congresses reflected a common trend without showing the complexity and diversity of the situation.

In terms of their right to work, three points are to be considered: firstly, the way women's employment itself was regarded, secondly, the consequences of women's employment according to trade unionists and, thirdly, the solutions offered.

There were at least three kinds of responses to the question whether women should work or not. In this context the 1898 congress was a good illustration. The Marxist answer concluded that women were to be producers on the same footing as men. Thus Jules Guesde himself could not help criticising the outcome of the congress in the following terms:

> *"Voir proclamer par le Congrès de Rennes (...) que la femme est faite pour être nourrie par l'homme, et émettre le voeu que le travail économique soit interdit à la femme mariée, et limité à la fille ou la veuve obligée de subvenir à ses besoins (...) c'est la théorie de Proudhon de la femme courtisane ou ménagère. C'est faire de la femme la prolétaire de l'homme. L'erreur est inexcusable après vingt-deux ans de propagande socialiste (...) la place de la femme n'est pas plus au foyer qu'ailleurs. Comme celle de l'homme, elle est partout, partout où son activité peut et veut l'employer (...) On doit assurer à la femme comme à l'homme le produit intégral de son travail."*[11]

There was also quite a different socialist response which did not deny the right to work in the capitalist order, but made it clear that in a socialist society there would be no need for women to work, in accordance to their social role:

> *"Considérant qu'il est impossible d'espérer la suppression de l'exploitation de la femme dans l'industrie, considérant que cette exploitation est due à la mauvaise constitution de l'état social actuel, les soussignés émettent le voeux*

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[10] Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966.
[11] Jules Guesde, *"La femme et son droit au travail"*, Le Socialiste, 9 October 1898.

que ce n'est que par une révolte générale des travailleurs que l'on amènera une transformation complète."[12]

Thirdly, the Prudhonian response denied women's right to work because of their constitution and social function:

"La femme doit demeurer à la maison et s'occuper seulement de son ménage."[13]

Because these three different kinds of answer ran concurrently, no definite conclusion on women's employment could be drawn by trade unionists, therefore neither could any definite attitude or position towards women in general be adopted.

In terms of the consequences of women's employment, once again, three kinds of responses could be identified. In relation to the organisation of work, women were thought to exacerbate unemployment by increasing competition and contribute to depreciate wages, as already mentioned in Chapter 1:

"Considérant que l'introduction de la femme dans l'industrie, où elle est en concurrence avec l'homme est un danger très grand (...) Considérant que cette introduction (...) a pour conséquence (...) d'élever la misère occasionnée par de plus fréquents chômages..."[14]

Female employment was also thought to be an evil for women as wives and mothers, which shows the correlation that could exist between the place to be given to women in a capitalist as well as in a socialist society[15]. For trade unionists too women's employment would not only pervert their morality, but it would also prevent them from giving birth to normal and healthy children. Thus, it was thought to divert them from their traditional role:

"Une femme entrée honnête et sage dans un atelier, ne tarde pas à se dépraver, étant sans cesse en butte aux séductions des ouvriers qui l'entourent. De plus, la femme qui travaille ne peut plus arriver à la maternité."[16]

The third consequence was related to the union organisation itself in the sense that women's employment was thought to turn workers against each other and reduce men's desire and motivation to militate. As women's wages were lower, they could be used and exploited by employers as tools against male workers and the unity of the working class as a whole. Furthermore, encouraging one's wife to work in order to make more money was sometimes depicted as a bourgeois attitude which went against the workers' cause:

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[12] Dixième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Rennes, les 26, 27, 28, 29 et 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, Rennes, Imprimerie des Arts et Manufactures, 1898, p. 181.
[13] Ibid., p. 184.
[14] Ibid., p. 174.
[15] See Chapter 1, pp. 30-32, for comparison.
[16] Dixième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Rennes, les 26, 27, 28, 29 et 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, op. cit., p. 180.

> *"Si la femme élimine l'homme de l'atelier, c'est de la faute de l'homme qui y conduit lui même sa femme et ses filles dans le but d'augmenter le bien être dans son intérieur."*[17]

As noticed by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard[18], this idea that it was unfitting for a militant to send his wife to work was rather paradoxical. Two interpretations could be distinguished, depending on the male workers' own interests. On the one hand, the ideal vision of a worker's family was similar to the paternalistic bourgeois one, with the woman staying at home to look after the children while the husband would earn enough money to sustain the family economy. Keeping this in mind, it could be argued that the fact that the wife had to work was more a sign of pauperisation than enrichment. On the other hand, sending one's wife to work could also be regarded as bourgeois. This shows once again the contradiction which existed in the trade union movement when the time came to deal with women. As both worker and husband, the male militant thought it was wrong to encourage one's wife to work: as worker it was to protect his right and status on the labour market and to avoid competition, as husband, it was to defend his status as a man, hence the bourgeois paternalistic values. Thus, most trade unionists rejected the capitalist system of society which forced women to work, but by doing so, they also accepted values of the order they meant to destroy. There was therefore no place for a revolution in terms of gender.

The third aspect to be considered in respect to women's right to work concerns the solutions proposed by trade unions to solve the problem of women's employment. Some unions, and this attitude was widespread in the book industry, opposed their employment and encouraged its suppression :

> *"Nous reconnaissons que dans la société, il y a nombre de femmes qui sont dans la nécessité de travailler (...) dans ces circonstances spéciales, tous les militants de toutes les professions, en proclamant le travail de la femme dans l'industrie comme antisocial, en poursuivant sa suppression, affirment la nécessité de réclamer pour elle un salaire égal pour un travail égal."*[19]

It must be said that even the necessity of equal pay for equal work was, in some cases, to banish women from work in so far as it was commonly thought that employers would not employ women if they were paid the same as men. As shown below, even women seem to have been aware of this indirect way of reducing their chances on the labour market:

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[17] Ibid., p. 179.
[18] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Femmes et syndicalisme en France avant 1914, Paris, Anthropos, 1978, pp. 189-190.
[19] Dixième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Rennes, les 26, 27, 28, 29 et 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, op. cit., p. 182.

> *"On leur [les femmes] a proposé de se syndiquer et de demander ensuite un salaire égal à celui des hommes. Elles ont répondu que les patrons, dans ce cas, préféreraient n'employer que des hommes, et elles ont refusé."*[20]

What place were women to be given as workers for those resigned to the fact that it was impossible to deny their right to work in that same society? Firstly, if women were to work, they had to be limited to particular industries, and this for several reasons. Thus, during the 1898 congress, the *Chambre syndicale des ferblantiers de la Seine* suggested that unions should encourage their members not to let their wives work in industries where they would take men's jobs[21]; the Saint-Étienne *Bourse du travail* proposed to ban women from dangerous and unsanitary jobs likely to endanger their capacity for reproduction[22], whereas the *Syndicat des ouvriers limonadiers de Paris* asked for women to be excluded from work in cafés, brasseries and taverns to protect their morality, using the following excuse:

> *"Parce que ce genre de travail les pousse généralement à la démoralisation."*[23]

In addition to these limitations in space, women had also to be restricted in time in consideration of their physical weakness and their family responsibilities. These arguments were used for instance to justify the need to respect the 1892 legislation or to apply the 8 hour working day or the *semaine anglaise*.

In terms of women's organisation, their admission to unions was directly linked to the way their work was perceived and the needs of male trade unionists. As already mentioned, it is not before 1894 that the usefulness of getting them organised became an issue. However, this overall picture conceals some differences existing within the labour movement. Unlike the hostile Book federation which admitted women in its ranks only in 1910, some federations, like the Textiles and Clothes federations, did not officially oppose their entry. Madeleine Guilbert has shown that the hostility was generally the strongest in industries where the competition between male and female workers was also the strongest.

Despite the perseverance and predominance of Prudhonian attitudes, one cannot deny that there was an increasing desire to unionise women. This desire was partially explained by the fact that if women had to work in the present society, it would be in the interest of the workers to unionise them in order to control their employment and to make them allies rather than enemies and employers' tools:

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[20] Ibid., p. 178.
[21] Ibid., p. 183.
[22] Ibid., p. 183.
[23] Ibid., p. 181.

> *"Des travailleurs croient bénévolement écarter la femme de l'atelier en l'écartant du syndicat, c'est le phénomène contraire qui se produira. Ferons-nous ainsi le jeu du patronat?"*[24]

In industries where the need to organise women had been recognised, the question was how to organise them. In terms of gender division, where men and women worked together, most unions would accept both genders, but the fact that women should join unions did not necessarily mean that they should do so alongside men. The question of organising women separately or not remained a problematic issue despite the decision taken in the 1906 Amiens congress to merge unions affiliated to the same branch and the same local trade union centre, which should have led to the merging of female and male unions. Yet a trend towards a common unionisation could already be seen in the early 1900s. In 1901 for instance, one could read in La Voix du peuple:

> *"Doit-on favoriser la création de syndicats féminins ou, au contraire, est-il préférable de réunir hommes et femmes dans un unique groupement pour chaque profession (...) Mais la femme peut-elle seule imposer l'égalité des salaires pour les deux sexes? En groupant avec nous les ouvrières, nous augmentons notre puissance et nous pouvons tenter d'imposer nos revendications au patronat. Il n'en sera pas ainsi tant que la femme restera ou sera tenue à l'écart: elle luttera de son côté pour des revendications autres que celles des hommes, et parfois contre celles des hommes."*[25]

It appears clearly from this statement that this desire to associate women to a common cause was in fact a combination of a lack of confidence in their ability to fight and of a distrust towards them; women were to join unions to be controlled by men and to make sure that they would not struggle for the "wrong cause", that is to say, against men. This shows that unions were to use women in an opportunist and strategic way.

The same could be said about the way the CGT took women's needs on board in its campaigns. Madeleine Guilbert's study has shown that the growing participation of women in the working population did not really influence the nature of the claims throughout the period. However, it progressively changed the way these claims were presented and justified. The most typical example to illustrate this evolution lies in the various campaigns organised in order to reduce working hours. In 1904-1905, the specificity of women was hardly used, whereas a few years later, in 1911, numerous articles insisted on the way women in particular would benefit from shorter hours[26]. Their specificity came therefore to be used in an attempt to

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[24] Woillot, *"La femme dans les syndicats"*, La Voix du peuple, 8 December 1901.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Madeleine Guilbert, *"La présence des femmes dans les professions et ses incidences sur l'action syndicale*

acknowledge their presence in the labour movement, but this was not to mean that their specificity should be treated separately. Their needs were recognised but were, once again, to serve the cause of the working class as a whole, not of women in particular, therefore they had to be the means to justify and achieve a masculine aim.

The influence of the feminist movement

The increasing desire, and need, to unionise women, as well as the distrust and idea that women could come to struggle for a "wrong cause", were in fact related to the growing feminist movement and the influence the latter had in shaping the evolution of the labour movement in relation to women. Originally, there was not necessarily a great deal of distrust between the two movements. When looking at the various claims made for women workers at the various feminist congresses at the turn of the nineteenth century, one cannot help noticing some common points, such as: equal pay for equal work, increase in wages, reduction of working hours, ban on women's employment in dangerous trades, the necessity for a weekly rest and maternity leave, and the admission of women in unions[27]. Yet, as a general rule, after 1848 feminism evolved apart from the labour movement, with the latter finding a justification for its anti-feminism in Prudhon and the former becoming more and more bourgeois orientated.

In order to counterbalance the lack of interest of male trade unionists in the organisation of women, some feminists, like Marguerite Durand, initiated the creation of female unions. Yet, as was the case in male trade unionists' minds, this kind of unionisation was based on the idea that female workers were not educated enough to be responsible for their own organisation, hence the necessity for feminist women to take this responsibility for them, and hence the difficulty for the labour movement to accept them as allies, as shown below:

> *"Les féministes ont une attitude paternaliste vis-à-vis des femmes travailleuses, mais elles sont accueillantes, elles offrent à des femmes bloquées dans une vie sans espoir la vision d'un lendemain meilleur. La carence des syndicats ouvriers, liée à la peur de la concurrence féminine qui leur fait définir la femme comme un être d'intérieur, la difficulté des ouvriers à rejeter les images féminines imposées par l'idéologie dominante, vont pousser les féministes à prendre en main la syndicalisation des femmes (...) Le syndicat n'est pas pour les féministes l'organe de la révolution mais un moyen*

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avant 1914", Le Mouvement social, 63, 1968, pp. 138-139.

[27] See Maïté Albistour and Daniel Armogathe, Histoire du féminisme français, Vol. 2, Paris, Éditions des Femmes, 1977, pp. 525-528.

pour les femmes de sortir de leur isolement, un moyen pour elles de ne plus subir une surexploitation."[28]

Such a statement makes the internal conflicts which could exist between the two movements clearer in several ways. First of all, the paternalistic attitude of feminists represented a direct threat to the traditional male dominant position. In male militants' minds, feminists appeared as competitors to the male power of control over women in the same way as women appeared as competitors to the male power of control over the labour market. Thus, one may wonder to what extent this competition, as well as the jealousy and resentment it probably aroused among male trade unionists, counted in the rejection of feminism by the labour movement. It could be argued that beyond the conflict of feminism versus trade unionism lay a conflict of supremacy, power and control of one gender over the other. Furthermore, for most male trade unionists, feminism represented a bourgeois movement aimed at dividing men and women in the working class in the name of a so-called feminine solidarity and according to principles based on gender differences. Therefore, to them, it had to be seen as an threat to the class struggle.

The rejection of the bourgeois feminism by the male dominated labour movement was therefore as much the rejection of the power women could have on their own destiny as the rejection of one class. Losing the female working class to the benefit of a feminine as well as feminist ideology would not only have meant losing almost half of their potential members, but also losing the possibility of controlling this potential to the benefit of a movement governed by men and reflecting as well as perpetuating the patriarchal order of society. This is probably why the CGT actually did something about women only when the feminist threat had become all too obvious and problematic to its members; in March 1907, the confederation took the opportunity of a feminine congress, organised by Marguerite Durand and including many female trade unionists, to try to form, in vain, a *Comité d'action féministe syndicaliste* under Maximilienne Biais' control. Despite this failure, this committee was the CGT's first concrete attempt to organise women on a national basis[29].

Yet, it is not before 1914 that the confederation acknowledged the importance of educating women so that they could develop a class identity and accordingly launched a campaign. The plan of action was to undertake preliminary surveys in every industry on women's working

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[28] Cited by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France avant 1914, PhD Thesis, Tours, 1973, p. 295.

[29] See Chapter 3, pp. 164-168, for details on the series of events which led feminism to be seen as a real threat by the CGT. Particular attention should be given to the Couriau Affair in 1913.

conditions. Once their background was known, an education campaign was to teach them the usefulness of unions and once this usefulness was understood, a campaign of trade unionisation could start. A *Ligue féminine d'action syndicaliste* was to be created to control and supervise the whole process. This plan was to be discussed in the 1914 congress but, unfortunately, the outbreak of the war killed the project at its inception. Yet, it could be argued that the project would have been doomed to failure anyway in the sense that the CGT missed half of the problem by ignoring the dominant masculine vision of its movement and by not planning to educate males at the same time; a transplant can only succeed in a compatible body ready to accommodate it, which could not be said of the CGT at this time. One may wonder to what extent this omission was not conscious in so far as changing men's attitudes could have led to a redefinition of the whole labour movement. By 1914 this movement was not ready for such a change. On the one hand, it cannot be denied that the CGT 's interest in women's problems increased throughout the years. On the other hand, it has been seen that this interest could be coupled with a hidden hostility towards their employment: their unionisation, by making them less docile and more threatening in employers' minds could prevent them from being employed instead of men in the same way as "equal pay for equal work" or specific legislation could. So it would be too unrealistic to say that by the eve of the First World War the Prudhonian heritage had been destroyed, as shown below:

> *"On discute beaucoup ces temps-ci du droit de la femme au travail, j'ai entendu des camarades formuler leur opinion d'une simple phrase: la femme au foyer."*[30]

The example of the CGT showed that there could be a gap between what was decided and what was actually done, between what was understood and what was accepted. The confederation decided to take into account the presence of women for its own sake, but did not do much to facilitate this presence; it claimed to understand the needs of women, but did not accept the fact that these needs were not necessarily the same as the majority of the movement, therefore it managed to adapt the needs of the former to the needs of the later, thus denying any possibility for women to change their position of inferiority both at work and in the movement. Such an attitude is to be related to the fact that unions never intended to change the position of women in society because they were themselves the reflection and prolongation of the paternalistic order of society. Because they were male dominated, they were run by and for men, therefore male orientated unions defining the issues upon which they

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[30] La Voix du peuple, 16 March 1914.

should struggle on the basis of men's experiences, from men's perspectives and finally for men's benefit. Thus, despite undeniable progress, the persistent rejection of women's issues delayed the organisation of the whole movement by ignoring almost half of its potential members. As a result, instead of feeling part of and developing a union tradition, women remained outsiders, which contributed to the perpetuation of the reasons why they were rejected. There was not to be a revolution in the gender organisation of society[31].

The attitudes of tobacco workers' and hatters' unions to women

Although the CGT accepted women in its ranks from the beginning, the examination of the general context of the period has shown the existing difficulties they could meet in joining unions in terms of policies and attitudes of the majority towards them. Yet, as already suggested, these difficulties varied from one federation to another. The first chapter of this study suggested that the characteristics of the tobacco industry facilitated women's trade unionisation in comparison with the hat industry. The question is now to know whether the same could be said about the characteristics of their respective unions and federations in relation to women. The masculine orientation of unions has often been given as one of the major causes to explain women's low level of participation. In this context, it could be expected that tobacco workers' unions were much more geared towards women and corresponded more to pre-determined female characteristics than hatters' unions. This section will examine to which extent this was true.

Unions and unionisation

First of all, it could be assumed that women were more likely to join unions which were legally recognised in order to have the protection of the law and therefore feel less pressurised. It is known that generally speaking men did not wait for unions to become legal to form their own unions, and in connection to this, hatters were a good example since they created their first union in 1820. Yet, it is interesting to notice that the first proper female hatters' union was not created until 1887, that is to say exactly the same year as the first female union in the tobacco industry, and exactly three years after the law legalising unions was passed. This could prove that the original assumption was right. Yet, it is known that hatters, unlike tobacco workers, failed to attract women massively even after the law was passed. Therefore, as the difference

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[31] See Barbara Drake, Women in Trade Unions, London, Allen and Unwin, 1920, p. 220.

in the participation of women in both industries still existed after 1884, it can be said that the law itself cannot constitute a relevant element in the explanation of this difference.

As it has already been suggested in the first chapter, it could also be assumed that it was easier for women tobacco workers to join unions because once the law was passed it would be difficult for the state to justify any infringements to it. Yet, such a principle must be confronted with the facts before being adopted as a valid element of explanation.

In legal terms, the position of tobacco workers in relation to the 1884 law legalising unions remained ambiguous for several years. Nothing in the text itself prevented them from creating unions in the sense that, as tobacco workers, they had to defend "*des intérêts industriels, commerciaux ou agricoles*", as stated by the law. Originally, however, the latter was not to be applied to them because they were regarded as state workers before being considered as industrial workers. Thus in 1891, the *Ministère du commerce*, in agreement with the *Chambre des députés,* claimed that state workers were not allowed to form unions[32]. Yet, three years later, in 1894, the *Chambre* changed its position and the following proposal was put on the agenda and eventually voted:

> *"La Chambre, considérant que la loi de 1884 s'applique aux ouvriers et employés de l'État aussi bien qu'à ceux des industries privées, invite le gouvernement à la respecter et à en faciliter l'exécution."*[33]

Despite these debates at the top and the state workers' so called privileges, tobacco workers did not wait for government agreement to form their own unions, to the regret of officials:

> *"Les privilèges dont jouissent les ouvriers de l'État, la bienveillance dont ils sont l'objet, les satisfactions qu'on leur a accordées n'ont pas modéré leurs exigences."*[34]

This is no surprise when considering the fact that privileged workers were historically the first to develop unions. However, it must be noticed that the first tobacco workers' union was created two years after unions were made legal. Thus, they waited for unions to be acknowledged by law to launch their movement, which shows a certain cautiousness on their part. Yet, they did not wait for the government approval to do so, which in turn shows their wish to stand up for their rights as workers, despite their employer and their status as state workers.

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[32] Maurice Bourguin, De l'application des lois ouvrières aux ouvriers et employés de l'État, Paris, Rousseau, 1902, p. 59.
[33] Ibid., p. 66.
[34] Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, p. 451.

From 1894 onwards, the legitimacy of tobacco workers' unions was never called into question as such, but this does not necessarily mean that the state, despite its obligation to allow its workers to form unions, encouraged and facilitated their unionisation. As early as 1891, the Central Administration of the tobacco factories advised local managers to try to dissuade workers from joining unions by showing the uselessness of unionisation to potential members and forbidding militants from holding meetings, putting posters or collecting subscriptions within the factories[35]. In fact, the attitude of the management with regard to unionisation led to permanent complaints from the workers. During the 1891 congress a delegate from Dieppe declared that some female workers were forced to leave the union if they wanted to keep their job[36]. In Marseilles in 1892 Mme Sommier was suspended for eight days after complaining about the attitude of a supervisor who had tried to dissuade women from joining the newly created union[37]. In addition, in June 1898, the manager of the Le Mans factory used the following terms when recruiting three women:

> *"Vous êtes enrôlées à la manufacture, mais si vous voulez y rester, promettez-moi que vous ne ferez pas partie ni de la société ancienne, ni du syndicat."*[38]

It might have appeared normal for the central management not to allow workers to militate within the factories, in accordance with the factory regulations. Yet examples of punishments for discussion on trade union matters outside the factory doors were also found[39]. It is clear that there was a constant pressure between what the state had to implement according to the law and its wish to keep its authority and therefore control on its workforce. This is why the image of the model employer which should stand as an example to other employers and apply the law was to have some limits so as to keep the balance right between the power of the state and the power of its workers.

Yet, this image of a conflicting relationship between the management and trade unionists must be qualified. L'Écho des tabacs is full of examples of friendly terms between the two parties. For instance, during the annual meeting of the Reuilly section in January 1903, a medal of honour was given to the president and vice-president of the local union, *Citoyenne* Alpeter and M^elle^ Germont, on behalf of the *Ministre du commerce*, to thank them for their devotion

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[35] Ibid., p. 308.
[36] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, Paris, Imprimerie Jean Allemane, 1892, p. 16.
[37] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, Paris, Imprimerie Perréal, 1892, p. 28.
[38] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1899, p. 2.
[39] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 29.

and the work they had done for the union[40]. As will be seen later in this chapter, militants were also respectful of the hierarchy in their relationship with officials and representatives of the state because, not only did they accept this authority, but it was also in their own interest to do so. Therefore, such behaviour indicates that, at this stage, it would be inadequate to say that the state managed to make the unionisation of its workers an impossible task, at least in practical terms.

It has not been proved that it was easier or harder for hatters to join unions. In 1900 in Châlabre, for instance, some workers were sacked for being union members while others went on strike to protest against their employers who demanded hatters' resignation from their union if they wanted to be recruited[41]. In Lille in September 1909, the employer of the Walke factory sacked a female worker who was also a member of the local union board[42]. In Bellegarde in April 1911, a strike was declared for the reintegration of Esther Blanchet who had been sacked for being a member of the union[43]. These examples tend to show that the pressure put on union members could be rather strong. However, according to Jean Vial, the fact that the majority of hatters worked in small workshops also meant that they were in closer contact with their employers who sometimes were themselves ex-workers. They all shared common interests and their relationships were described as generally good. Vial even mentioned cases of employers advising their workers to become members: in Épinal in 1905, one advised his workers to attend a meeting organised by the federation, whereas in Paris employers passed unions information on to their workers[44]. Without saying that it was easier for hatters to join union in terms of right, such examples show at least that it would be unfair to say that it was more difficult. In practical terms, it would therefore be impossible to establish whether the pressure put on female workers by employers was stronger among tobacco workers or hatters, which is one of the reasons usually given to explain the lack of their involvement in unions. However, it is believed that a difference must be made in terms of the pressure workers could put in return on their employers if the latter did not respect the right of workers to unionise. As argued in Chapter 1, it was probably easier for tobacco workers to confront their employers in the sense that they could use the argument of

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[40] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1903, p. 2.
[41] AN BB18 2153 594 A00, *"Grève des chapeliers de Chalâbre"*.
[42] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, *"Grèves et lock-outs"*, Quinzième congrès national, tenu à Bort, du 22 au 27 juillet 1912, Paris, Imprimerie La Productrice, 1913, p. 8.
[43] Ibid., p. 13.
[44] Jean Vial, La Coutume chapelière, Paris, Domat-Montchrétien, 1941, pp. 280-283.

legislation and the fact that the state should be the first one to implement it. It does not mean that the state did implement it in a better way than private employers, but at least, workers had the possibility of using the image of the model employer against their employer. So, despite no practical evidence of the fact that the state made it easier for tobacco workers to join unions, it is believed that psychological elements could have eased the pressure put on them.

It could be assumed that women would generally feel more likely to become union members in industries with a long tradition of trade unionisation or with a well organised and powerful movement on which they could rely. Their lack of experience could then be counterbalanced by the experience given by time or the accumulation of individual experiences. This, in turn, could give unions more credibility, and women more confidence in their usefulness.

As far as tobacco workers are concerned, they created their first union in Marseilles in February 1886. In January 1887, the female workers of the same locality founded another union after a successful strike, under the impulsion of the local *Union des chambres syndicales ouvrières*[45]. The Paris factories soon followed: Le Gros Caillou founded a union in October 1889, Pantin in January 1890 and Reuilly in July 1890. The latter, with the support of the newly created union of the Lyons factory, joined their efforts to create a federation in January 1891[46]. By the end of that year, the federation already included 17 factories: among which were Bordeaux, Châteauroux, Dieppe, Dijon, Le Havre, Lille, Morlaix, Nancy, Nice, Pantin, Reuilly and Toulouse. As the Marseilles female union refused to join this national movement, women dissidents created another union in March 1892 to be part of the national federation. Three other unions were founded in Tonneins, Riom and Le Mans in 1892. Thus, 20 factories came to be represented at the second federative congress. Membership passed from 8 641 in December 1891, including 7 797 women, to 10 540 in December 1892[47], and from 9 817 in 1900 to 13 118 in 1914[48] (See appendix 2.4). By 1913, no less than 15 607 workers were unionised out of over 18 000 workers, that is to say an average of more than 85%.

Comparatively, the organisation of hatters was much older, the first union being created in Paris in 1820. Founded in 1879, the *Société générale des ouvriers chapeliers de France* was

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[45] Claude Réal, Le tabac et les allumettes, Paris, Doin, 1928, p. 264.
[46] Although the fedderation was formed in the last months of 1890, its creation became official only in January 1891.
[47] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, Paris, Imprimerie Perréal, 1894, p. 197.
[48] Figures established according to the Annuaire des syndicats.

the first trade national federation. By the time the 1884 law legalising unions was passed there were already 16 hatters' unions. Thus, it can be said that by 1890, hatters had already a firmly established tradition of organisation, while tobacco workers had just initiated theirs. However, hatters' unionisation remained slow, as opposed to that of tobacco workers which came much later but proved to be much more dynamic; by 1901 only 5.7% of the former were unionised[49], against 81.74% for the latter (See appendices 2.5 and 2.6). In addition, the increase in the number of unionised hatters between 1890 and 1914 remained comparatively poor; about 168% against about 363%. In one case, the majority of women in the industry was considered partly responsible for this low increase, whereas in the second case, this majority was an essential factor in the rapid increase.

It has already been suggested that this difference could be explained by the way women were perceived as workers in both industries[50]. Yet, other factors must be taken into consideration, such as the concentration of workers in unions. Although the average number of hatters per union tended to increase, passing from 69 in 1890 to 158 in 1914, it was far from reaching the same level as tobacco workers, with their minimum being 285 and maximum 567. Putting this concentration back into the context of this study, it meant that not only did hatters from the same locality not necessarily work in the same business, but also that only a few of them would meet in unions, if they had any. On the contrary, the concentration of tobacco workers in the same factory would be combined with their being assembled in big unions, which is to be related to what was previously said about the power of mass movements and psychological elements. It is interesting to notice that in 1914 for instance, there were almost as many unions in the tobacco industry as in the hat industry, while the hatters' population of the hat industry was about 2.5 times more than the tobacco workers' population. 40 unions for hatters is rather poor, when considering the fact that all the censuses listed hat industry activity in all the French departments, but 37 could be described as many in the case of the tobacco industry, when considering the number of factories in France. In the first case, the figure reveals a lack of organisation, in the second case, it reveals, of course, divisions within the organisation, but the presence of at least one union in every factory also reveals the opportunity workers had to join unions. This opportunity cannot be ignored when considering the fact that women were

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[49] It must be noticed that there were strong variations from one region to another; for instance, according to Jean Vial, 95% of Parisian hatters were unionised in 1909.
See Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 362.

[50] This perception will be qualified later in this chapter. See pp. 97-110.

less likely to form a union by their own initiative. Therefore, it could be said that it was somewhat easier for female tobacco workers to join unions because they were provided with not only the support of a mass movement, but also with a solid, extended network of unions.

Thus, by 1914 workers from both industries had a rather similar number of unions, a federation to represent them nationally, and yet a completely different type of organisation. Hatters had the tradition, but this tradition was male based, therefore women hatters could not identify themselves with the majority, hence the difficulty for them to feel part of the movement. It was suggested before that tradition could make women feel more secure because supported with experience, but the example of hatters shows not only that it was not necessarily the case, but also that it could have the opposite effect, that is to say making them more insecure. It could be argued that despite its long tradition of organisation and the constitution of its workforce hatters failed to attract women because they did not recognise their needs and perpetuated the masculine vision of work and organisation. On the other hand, because the tobacco industry had no tradition of unionisation and no masculine vision of work, when the movement was launched, women, as workers, had the possibility to get involved in it without having to face masculine prejudices towards their gender. As a result, this industry became not only an industry with a vast majority of unionised workers, but also the only one where women's representation in unions was almost equivalent to the proportion of women in the workforce. This shows and confirms that a mass movement was more likely to make women feel part of the workers' family, as already suggested in the first chapter[51].

However that may be, in terms of union organisation, the above elements are not sufficient to explain the huge difference existing between the two industries. For instance, the lack of male tradition in one given organisation does not prevent this organisation from adopting traditional social values and does not necessarily mean that women would get involved if they could not see the point of doing so. Consequently, other factors must be taken into consideration, such as the form of trade unionism chosen by both federations.

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[51] See Madeleine Guilbert, *"La présence des femmes dans les professions et ses incidences sur l'action syndicale avant 1914"*, op. cit., p. 141.

Between reformism and revolution

The examination of the CGT congress reports in particular has revealed that women were more likely to get involved in short term action related to their conditions and salary rather than in ideological debates. Furthermore, it has been mentioned that the fact that tobacco workers were state workers made them cautious in their relationship with trade unionism. It is believed that women would probably feel more attracted to a form of trade unionism more concerned with concrete action and immediate improvements, that is to say a reformist version of trade unionism, as opposed to a revolutionary one. As put at the time by Auguste Pawloski:

> *"Moins idéaliste, moins teintée de philosophie transcendante que l'homme, la femme est dans bien des cas, plus pratique que lui."*[52]

Therefore, it seems important to consider, firstly, how far tobacco workers' cautiousness went and, secondly, the implication this could have for women.

Because tobacco workers depended directly on the state, any claim made on a local level had to be approved by the local or central management, while any national one had to be voted by Parliament to be implemented. Therefore, as put by Charles Mannheim, any demand was to be treated as a political issue, which made theirs different from the other industrial workers':

> *"La question ouvrière dans les manufactures ne soulève pas, comme dans l'industrie privée, un problème économique et social, mais un problème politique, c'est à dire pouvant être résolu par voie d'autorité."*[53]

This political involvement had many consequences on their form of trade unionism. They had to respect the political hierarchy so as not to endanger their chances of success. Thus, not only did they have to respect the authority of the state, but, by so doing, they also had to accept it and make sure that they did not appear as a threat to the order represented and controlled by the state. This respect was visible in various ways such as in their relationship with the state and in their means of action.

Their respect for the state was particularly evident in their respect for the system and the people representing this system, that is to say not only their superiors but also public opinion which supported the latter. At a local level, their congresses and L'Écho des tabacs are full of instances of workers' annual meetings to which the manager of the factory was invited. In most cases, his presence would be regarded as an honour and he would be personally thanked by the union representatives[54]. In addition, as they were well aware of their privileged position as state workers, which could create jealousy among local communities, they knew that it was

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[52] Auguste Pawlowski, Les syndicats féminins et les syndicats mixtes en France, Paris, F. Alcan, 1912, p. 95.
[53] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 453.
[54] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1909, p. 4.

in their own interest not to appear too demanding so as not to upset local public opinion and less demanding workers who would bè quite happy to replace them:

> *"Nous sommes un peu forcés de mettre une sourdine à nos revendications, car la population ne nous soutiendrait pas, attendu qu'il y a parmi elle des quantités de postulants attendant le tour et qui seraient fort heureux de nous remplacer à quelque prix que ce soit."*[55]

Tobacco workers' awareness of the importance of public opinion also led them to be extremely cautious with the way they dealt with members of the government so as not to get criticised by the bourgeois press at a national level. During the 1906 CGT congress, Mallardé, the leader of the federation, declared:

> *"Je dis que les tactiques sont propres aux fédérations et doivent varier avec leurs conditions professionnelles (...) Quand nous avons demandé au Ministre des Finances la journée de neuf heures, nous nous sommes engagés à assurer la production. (...) Nous avons consenti à faire dix heures pendant quelques jours, pour empêcher les critiques de la presse bourgeoise qui se seraient produites contre nous et nos revendications."*[56]

The tobacco industry being a state monopoly, they had to find the right balance between their claims - which were for their own good- and what they were expected to do as state workers. On the one hand, workers were aware of their need for support, on the other hand the government and the bourgeois press would not tolerate it if they endangered the authority of the system on which they relied. Therefore, it was not in their interest to appear too revolutionary and to call into question the role of the state as an employer. As will be seen later in this chapter, tobacco workers did not wish to reverse the system, but rather use it to obtain immediate improvements in the present society:

> *"Nous estimons que le syndicat est et ne doit être que l'arme nécessaire pour obtenir des meilleures conditions de travail et de salaire dans la société actuelle."*[57]

These examples show that tobacco workers were aware of their dependence and quite ready to accept it if this would guarantee the success of their demands. This acceptance would also imply that their means of action had to be based on consultation and compromise so as not to endanger their success. This does not mean however that they did not envisage the use of strikes in extreme cases, when any other means had failed. Thus, as early as their first National Congress in 1891, Lelorrain, one of the leaders of the federation, declared that all the legal

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[55] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 36.
[56] Quinzième congrès national corporatif et conférence des Bourses du travail, tenus à Amiens du 8 au 16 octobre 1906. Compte rendu des travaux, Amiens, Imprimerie du Progrès de la Somme, 1906, p. 121.
[57] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1903, p. 2.

means would be used to get what they wanted, but in case of refusal, they would not hesitate to come to extreme means:

> *"Et si par hasard, on refusait de nous entendre et de faire droits à nos justes revendications, alors nous n'aurions qu'un seul moyen, c'est de prendre nous même ce que l'on nous refuse, et bien malgré nous et à regret il est vrai, nous serions obligés de sortir de la légalité."* [58]

Nevertheless, the use of delegations remained their most common use of action throughout the period, as had been originally stated in the eighth article of the first union created in Marseilles:

> *"Le syndicat intervient autant que possible dans les conflits qui peuvent surgir entre l'administration et les ouvriers; il se met en rapport avec elle par voie de délégation, et fait tous ses efforts pour obtenir une conciliation."*[59]

As early as 1892, the central manager of the factories declared it compulsory for local managers to receive any delegation on questions related to the general interest of tobacco workers[60]. This had the advantage of creating an official way for workers to make their claims, a kind of network between them and the central administration via local managers. Thus, at any level of claims, they were provided with a determined plan of action supplied by the state itself, and in case of failure, the federation would support their strike.

This well organised network was complemented by solid political support. The federation constantly tried to get and keep the support of politicians. *Députés* and local politicians were regularly invited to their meetings and their annual congresses. Thus, the chairman of the plenary session ended their second congress in these terms:

> *"En continuant à unir nos efforts comme par le passé, nous arriverons sûrement à obtenir mieux encore dans l'avenir, grâce à notre bonne entente à tous, et aussi à l'obligeant concours des sénateurs, députés, conseillers municipaux et représentants de la presse qui veulent bien s'intéresser à nos travaux et nous honorent de leur présence aujourd'hui."*[61]

L'Écho des tabacs is full of this kind of attitude to local and national politicians. The latter were often asked to be part of a delegation sent to the *Ministre*[62] or the central management to support the workers' claims. Delegations to *députés* were common practice. Some female workers came to be criticised for appealing directly to politicians before warning the federation to solve a problem, like those in Marseilles in 1897 who asked a *député* to support

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[58] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., p. 45.

[59] Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1899, p. 603.

[60] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France,. Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 21.

[61] Ibid., p. 149.

[62] The tobacco monopoly was under the control of the *Ministre des finances.*

their strike without the consent of the Central Committee[63], or the one who wrote to the *Ministre* to complain about the fact that the manager of her factory had refused to recruit her son because she belonged to the union[64]. In October 1908, the federation even managed to convince the republican *députés* who had a tobacco factory in their constituency to form a parliamentary group to represent and defend the interests of state workers in the *Chambre*.

This direct involvement with politicians can explain why the relationship between the tobacco workers' federation and the CGT remained ambiguous for several years. The federation was represented at the CGT congress in Limoges in 1895. It then joined the confederation but was not represented at the 1896 congress, having left the confederation in June with no explanation. The federation became a permanent member of the CGT only in September 1901. Tobacco workers seem, therefore, to have been rather reluctant to trust the action led by the CGT in its first few years of existence. The revolutionary orientation of the CGT at this time, as well as its wish to remain independent from any political movement and the state, went against the form of trade unionism tobacco workers had to follow in respect of their situation as state workers. As expressed in the following proposal Mallardé, the leader of the federation, signed during the 1906 CGT congress, most of tobacco workers adopted a policy of class collaboration and political participation:

> *"Le congrès confédéral, considérant (...) que la CGT (...) n'a pas à devenir un instrument d'agitation anarchiste et antiparlementaire (...) affirme que l'action parlementaire doit se faire parallèlement à l'action syndicale, cette double action pouvant contribuer à l'oeuvre d'émancipation ouvrière et à la défense des intérêts corporatifs."*[65]

If the adoption of a reformist attitude was to be a major factor in explaining the difference between the tobacco industry and the hat industry in terms of women's participation, it would be expected that hatters, on the contrary, were favourable to direct action and a revolutionary form of trade unionism. Most of the figures of the federation were deeply involved in politics. Dejeante became the general secretary of the federation in 1890. In 1891, he was one of the leading figures of the *Parti ouvrier*. In November 1892, he participated in the congress of the *Parti ouvrier socialiste et révolutionnaire* and later became a *député*. Favreau, who was described as *blanquiste* was also a *député* between 1893 and 1901[66]. During campaigns,

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[63] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1897. pp. 1-2.
[64] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1900, p. 2.
[65] Quinzième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Amiens du 8 au 16 octobre 1906, op. cit., 1906, p. 157.
[66] Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 293.

L'Ouvrier chapelier would make appeals to support certain candidates for elections. In addition, the federation does not seem to have been opposed to the intervention of politicians to support hatters' claims[67]. Although the majority of hatters was not opposed to the suppression of the capitalist system[68] and regarded the government as the image of this system and therefore distrusted it, they encouraged the use of political institutions to get what they wanted, and by doing so they could be labelled as being reformist, as expressed in the following statement:

> *"Habitués grâce à leur mutualisme[69] à se passer des pouvoirs publics, ils méprisent certes la collaboration gouvernementale; mais riches des avantages obtenus par leur organisation, soit dans la lutte contre le malheur, soit dans les rapports avec les patrons, ils acceptent cette remarque de Pierre Milan: "Eh bien oui, je suis un réformiste."*[70]

Their reformism could also be noticed in the means they adopted. As already mentioned, the relationship between hatters and their employers was described as generally good. Consequently, most of the time, workers would go and see their boss to discuss their claims before going on strike[71].

In a way, it could be said that the forms of trade unionism chosen by both federations were rather similar, so they could not explain the difference existing between them in terms of women's participation. Yet, their implications in relation to women varied, which could play a great role in the way women perceived themselves and trade unionism.

First, the well structured plan of action of the tobacco workers' federation, as well as the support of politicians and public opinion they managed to keep, provided them with a solid network on which they could rely. In addition, their methods and reformism prevented them from being seen as a direct threat by their employers, which probably gave a sense of security to these hundreds of women, as acknowledged in 1899 by a female delegate:

> *"Contrairement à ce qui se passe dans d'autres corporations, nous n'avons pas à craindre d'être renvoyées par notre patron à la suite d'une délégation."*[72]

Secondly, the case of the tobacco industry shows that female workers could get interested in politics when they had the opportunity and could see the direct advantage of it, as opposed to

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[67] Ibid., p. 269.
[68] Ibid., p. 363.
[69] For further information on mutual aid associations as opposed to trade unions see: Michel Dreyfus, Histoire de la CGT, Paris, Complexe, 1995, pp. 9-36.
[70] Jean Vial, op. cit., p. 288.
[71] Ibid., p. 278.
[72] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1900, p. 4.

the traditional vision of women being more concerned with religious or domestic matters. In this connection, the following incident related by the leader of the Bordeaux union, Mme Sommier, during the 1892 congress is worth mentioning:

> *"On m'a reproché en haut lieu d'aller dans les réunions politiques une fois mon travail terminé. "Laissez donc la politique aux hommes, m'a-t-on dit. Il y en a assez parmi eux auxquels la politique trouble la cervelle sans que les femmes s'en mêlent!". "J'aime mieux cela que d'aller à la messe" ai-je répondu."* [73]

In addition to Mme Sommier's enthusiasm for her cause, this statement shows the extent to which politics and trade unionism were closely linked when related to tobacco workers. As a result of their successful involvement in politics, women tobacco workers came to be trusted as political tools, as put by the leader of the federation, Lelorrain, on several occasions:

> *"Bientôt elle placera son bulletin de vote dans l'urne et avec beaucoup plus de conscience que l'homme."* [74]
>
> *"Camarades, dans quelques semaines vont avoir lieu les élections; que tous, hommes et femmes, nous fassions notre devoir, c'est à dire de voter pour que des hommes capables..."* [75]

This admiration went beyond the federation itself and female tobacco workers came to be presented as models for women in general by outsiders too, like *Député* Rousset who declared at their fifth congress:

> *"Leur part, leur rôle qui leur appartient est une part naturellement exceptionnelle; vous êtes le premier syndicat où l'on voit des femmes présider, où l'on voit des femmes représenter des sections (...) C'est là un grand exemple qui va au dessus d'une corporation; il affirme les droits politiques de la femme."* [76]

At a time when women had no right to vote, the possibility for female tobacco workers to come in direct contact with members of the top of the political sphere, as well as the respect for and belief in their militancy this created, probably had a positive effect on the way women would perceive trade unionism as a means to do something concrete, as well as themselves as militants. They did not need the right to vote to express themselves in political terms, therefore, they could see the direct impact trade unionism could have as a means of taking their destiny into their own hands because they were directly involved in it. This is why it is believed that the importance of delegations to representatives of the state and the direct

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[73] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 29.
[74] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1897. p. 3.
[75] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1898, p. 1.
[76] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1896, p. 3.

political involvement that these delegations implied for female tobacco workers, must not be neglected in the explanation of their high participation rate. It probably gave them confidence and a sense of security of which most women were deprived. On the other hand, because the system of delegations and political support was far less developed in the hat industry, female hatters did not have the possibility of seeing the usefulness of the political involvement of their leaders in such a close way, and did not have the opportunity to get involved in it.

Men's attitudes to women

It has been seen that it is more the reasons and implications of the reformism adopted by the tobacco federation, rather than the adoption of a reformist attitude itself, that could partly explain the difference existing between one federation and the other. It seems important to combine this attitude to reformism with the general attitude of men towards women in both industries. On the one hand, it could be assumed that if men did not want the complete transformation of society, they were even less likely to want the transformation of the paternalistic order of society. On the other hand, it is believed that women were more likely to join a union which would offer them a welcoming environment. This does not necessarily mean that they would be accepted on an equal footing, but at least their participation in the movement would not be rejected. Therefore, in order to assess this environment, it seems important to examine in detail whether men in unions adopted a paternalistic vision and, if so, to what extent. Even slight differences between tobacco workers' and hatters' vision could partly explain the difference in the participation of women in the sense that it would make this participation easier for them, at least psychologically speaking.

Quantitatively speaking, both L'Écho des tabacs and L'Ouvrier chapelier offered a variety of information on women, but it is interesting to notice that articles devoted only to women were comparatively more numerous in the hatters' paper. Yet, the two papers used different methods to convey information. More editorial articles on women's issues were included in L'Ouvrier chapelier, which corresponded to a wish expressed at the 1898 hatters' congress where the following proposal was adopted:

> *"Le congrès émet le voeu que dans L'Ouvrier chapelier, l'on fasse un exposé précis sur le rôle de la femme dans l'existence humaine, et que l'on répande cette doctrine autant que possible dans la classe ouvrière."*[77]

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[77] Société générale des chapeliers de France, Dixième congrès national, tenu à Givors, du 15 au 20 juillet 1898, Carmaux, Imprimerie des Travailleurs Réunis, 1898, p. 28.

Yet, more reports and general information were to be found in L'Écho des tabacs. This, by itself, does not necessarily mean that women were more or less important in one federation or the other. It can reveal just a difference in form. Furthermore, the different articles varied in their meaning and purpose. In order to respond to the lack of women in unions, L'Ouvrier chapelier included more theoretical articles on their place and role in society and more appeals to them, whereas L'Écho des tabacs gave more details about women's activities in unions, as they already had women on their side. A difference in perspective does not necessarily mean a difference in interest, it can also reveal the different contexts and situations in which tobacco workers and hatters evolved. Therefore, approaching this issue in terms of quantity in both federative papers cannot prove anything in itself. Yet, a qualitative approach of these papers has revealed that the theoretical views of both tobacco workers and hatters on women, their role in society and their role as workers and trade unionists, did not greatly differ, as will be examined in detail now.

When looking at evidence of a reflection of traditional views on women in both federative papers, one cannot help noticing a difference of approach. Only a few examples were found in theoretical articles in L'Écho des tabacs. This chronic absence of theoretical background means that not a lot can be said at this stage when referring to tobacco workers. The two following quotations however indicate that women should be treated with respect according to their gender and be educated according to traditional values:

> *"C'est un homme et il doit comme tel le respect et la politesse à la femme."*[78]
> *"La femme dans la société future sera ce qu'elle doit être, un être adorablement admirable par excellence; bonne jeune fille, épouse sincère et mère capable et digne du nom d'être vraiment humain."*[79]

Comparatively speaking, L'Ouvrier chapelier offered a wide range of references to the traditional image of women as it was described in the first section of this chapter. This vast amount of examples shows that beyond hatters' concern for women lay a wish to expose a traditional, paternalistic ideology. According to this ideology, the nature of woman made her affectionate and kind. In some cases, these characteristics were depicted as qualities, and the fragility usually allocated to women became a masculine characteristic in order to enhance the nobleness of womanhood:

> *"La femme n'est-elle pas la moitié du genre humain; ne partage-t-elle pas nos joies et nos souffrances; n'est-elle pas notre ange consolateur; n'est-ce pas*

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[78] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1901, p. 2.
[79] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1900, p. 3.

elle qui fait des anges à notre image; n'est-ce pas elle qui, depuis notre naissance, nous prodigue tous les soins que réclame notre frêle nature et nous forme l'esprit et le coeur par son affection, ses bontés?"[80]

In other cases the same characteristics were presented as failures preventing the working class from becoming strong and enduring, as shown in the following extract from a poem written by a male worker:

"Les mères, soi-disant, sont pleines de tendresse,
Et de leurs rejetons les pleurs leur font pitié,
Moi, je nomme ça de la faiblesse,
Enseigner les devoirs est meilleure amitié."[81]

In addition to women's weaknesses, this extract, as does the previous quotation, shows the primarily role of women as mothers responsible for the education of their children. So, in any case, womanhood rhymed with motherhood.

In term of social duties, the primary female function was to stay at home when her husband was responsible for providing the family's needs:

"Interrogez la nature elle-même; elle vous dira que l'humanité vous ordonne à vous, hommes, de produire pour rapporter à la maison de quoi nourrir et élever la petite famille, elle vous dira que la femme est l'ange, le gardien du foyer, l'être humain chargé de donner à la nation (...) l'élément qui doit en faire la force et la gloire."[82]

With regards to women's employment, it has already been suggested that tobacco workers did not call into question their right to work because it was a right already well established and women did not appear as competitors. On the other hand, as expected, this question was much debated in L'Ouvrier chapelier. As it would be impossible as well as irrelevant to mention all the examples given to illustrate the hatters' vision, an analytic approach will be applied.

As a whole, this vision did not greatly differ from the traditional vision already commented on. Although they were generally not opposed to female employment in the present society because the capitalist system forced them to work, they depicted this employment as an evil as harmful as the system which had developed it. In economic terms, hatters too agreed with the traditional image of female paid labour increasing unemployment and competition, and depreciating wages:

"C'est avec la femme, avec l'ouvrière, que les capitalistes luttent maintenant contre l'ouvrier. La femme travaillant à un salaire beaucoup moins rémunérateur (...), les capitalistes ont donc tout intérêt à occuper des

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[80] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 27 April, p. 2.
[81] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 February 1891, p. 4
[82] Bordes, *"Nécessité de grouper les femmes dans un syndicat"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, December 1900, p. 5.

ouvrières au lieu des ouvriers puisque c'est avec les ouvrières qu'ils peuvent se faire le plus de bénéfices."[83]
" Elle est donc la concurrente de l'homme, et non comme elle devrait l'être sa compagne (...) les femmes et les jeunes filles remplissent les ateliers, et les hommes sont obligés d'errer par les rues faute de travail."[84]

Hatters also agreed that female paid labour was socially wrong because it perverted women and prevented them from giving birth to healthy babies. It terms of morality, it exposed women to men, therefore it represented a threat to their dignity but also a threat to married women:

"Ne voyons-nous pas des femmes, jeunes filles, jeunes mariées, mères de famille se trouvant en contact constant avec leurs propres frères, fils, pères; ou bien encore la femme mariée, livrée aux regards d'un autre."[85]

Hatters too regarded work for women as bad for them, as well as their children and their education, therefore for working class families, and therefore for the whole nation:

"La femme enfermée dès son bas âge dans une fabrique, privée du bon air et du repos nécessaire à son développement, (...) ne mettra au monde que des enfants faibles et déjà atteints du germe de la maladie."[86]
"L'ouvrière mariée est forcée de quitter son foyer de bonne heure pour la fabrique afin de contribuer à la subsistance de la famille. En arrivant chez elle le soir, fatiguée, (...) il faut qu'elle fasse son ménage (...) Pendant le jour, les enfants sont confiés à une voisine (...) la mère, elle, ne jouit guère des joies et du bonheur maternels (...) la mère ne peut donc exercer une influence quelconque sur l'éducation de ses enfants. Regardons maintenant le côté de la vie de fabrique: nous y voyons d'un côté des ouvrières moralement perverties; d'un autre côté, la situation des ouvrières en général plus misérable de jour en jour..."[87]

Once again, the vision of the double working day, of the mother leaving her offspring to the detriment of herself, her children and her family is apparent. Also obvious is the demoralising effect of work, which, when stretched to its extreme could lead to prostitution, the latter being presented as the direct result of women's low wages and a social evil created by employers:

"Nous, nous disons que ce qu'il faut supprimer, ce sont les hommes qui déshonorent la femme en ne lui accordant du travail qu'en se prostituant, ou qui les obligent à se prostituer faute de trouver dans le travail un salaire suffisant pour vivre."[88]

Such a statement makes women victims of a system which refuses them any kind of dignity. One way or another, the only alternative for women is to become prostitutes because work

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[83] L.C., *"La femme socialiste"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 11 October 1891, p. 1.
[84] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 18 December 1892, p. 3.
[85] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 June 1901, p. 2.
[86] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 2 February 1890. p. 3.
[87] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 18 December 1892, p. 3.
[88] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 27 April 1890, p. 2.
On prostitution, see also: L'Ouvrier chapelier, 5 July 1891, p. 3.

creates prostitution: prostitution via sexual harassment or prostitution as a supplement of income.

This demoralising effect of work could even go further in the sense that it could also have a stupefying effect on women, making them similar to animals incapable of reacting against their conditions:

> *"Femme par l'obligation de la loi du ventre, la femme cesse d'être la compagne de l'homme pour devenir sa femelle (...) elle devient une matière exploitable, sans force morale, sans virilité dans les mains de ceux qui jésuitement la plongent dans l'ignorance et l'abjection, tout en prônant bien haut son rôle sublime de reproductrice de l'espèce humaine."*[89]

The use of the masculine term *virilité* when referring to the situation of women in the present society shows once again the extent to which it was thought that their lack of power and masculine characteristics was regarded as one of the cause of their exploitation. If women were to change this situation, they had therefore to adopt masculine values.

It already appears from above that both tobacco workers and hatters had similar views on the nature and social role of women. Their exploitation was a matter of fact created by the economic system. Yet, for tobacco workers, the fact that they were employed by the state made them believe that their exploitation could be reduced via the exploitation of their employer and the system to their own benefit, whereas hatters were more convinced that women's exploitation would be reduced via the progressive transformation and redefinition of this system. That is probably why tobacco workers were fundamentally much more cautious in their attacks on their employer, as opposed to hatters who did not hesitate to express strong views on this matter on a general, but not necessarily personal, basis:

> *"Quel est le but de cette racaille patronale? Celui de rogner les salaires, de tripoter plus facilement la femme et s'octroyer une supériorité d'autorité."*[90]

Yet, on both sides, employers were not the only ones to blame. Women were considered to be at fault too in the sense that their attitude could contribute to prolonging their own exploitation. This idea was clearly expressed in L'Écho des tabacs on several occasions. For instance, women were accused of greediness and therefore of acting against unions' and workers' interests, as attested by Bernailles, from Limoges, at the 1908 congress:

> *"J'estime tout de même que vous, femmes, dans vos manufactures, vous qui ne connaissez que l'appât du gain, et qui en retour ne voulez rien donner...*

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[89] L. C., *"La dépopulation"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 5 July 1891, p. 2.
[90] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 25 June 1899, p. 3.

J'estime qu'il faut augmenter cette cotisation. Si les femmes s'y opposent, les hommes n'y sont pas réfractaires."[91]

The same accusation was found during the 1909 congress, with women being accused by Moritz of selfishness because they had done the same work in 9 hours as they would have done in 10, in order to increase their wages[92].

As shown below, the same kind of view was found in L'Ouvrier chapelier. Women were first accused of indifference:

"Il règne parmi les jeunes ouvrières une telle indifférence stupide (...). L'idée ne leur vient pas (...) qu'elles nuisent par leur indifférence au métier même et qu'elles sapent le respect dû à la femme."[93]

" La très grande indifférence des ouvrières joue ici un rôle prépondérant. Le fabricant profite de leur faiblesse, il voit qu'elles sont plus soumises que l'homme et moins capables de résister, elles sont plus exploitables. L'ouvrière ne se défend pas parce qu'elle se sent faible et n'ose faire partie d'une société."[94]

This indifference was, in some cases, presented as the product of their natural frivolity, and therefore, if they did not intend to get interested in more serious matters in order to change their own situation, they would not be worth being taken into consideration:

"Les modistes ont tendance à parler de frivolité plutôt que de choses sérieuses (...) le plus grand nombre d'entre elles, qui se nourrissent encore d'illusions, espèrent la venue d'un prince charmant pour améliorer leur situation économique"[95]

"Les ouvrières modistes n'ont que ce qu'elles méritent car (...) ces demoiselles préfèrent le bal et le plaisir au lieu et place de la Bourse du travail (...), par conséquent elles sont peu dignes d'intérêt."[96]

Women were sometimes presented as ignorant, but this ignorance could be as much the product of their own indifference, as that of their traditional education:

"Dites-vous bien, pauvres mères que votre ignorance, votre mauvaise volonté, votre lâcheté même sont pour une part cause du malheur de vos enfants."[97]

"Beaucoup de camarades se trouvent aux prises avec leur femme lorsqu'il s'agit de quitter le domicile conjugal pour aller à une réunion de syndicat (...) Cela tient à une simple chose... à l'éducation première de la femme. En effet, la femme ne comprend rien à l'organisation sociale. Elle constate tout simplement que la paye n'est pas suffisante pour faire bouillir la marmite, sans s'inquiéter d'où provient cette insuffisance."[98]

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[91] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1909, p. 6.
[92] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1910, p. 8.
[93] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 7 December 1890.
[94] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 18 December 1892, p. 3.
[95] AN F7 13 881, "Chapellerie: notes 1912 - *"Réunion organisée par le Syndicat des modistes de Paris"*, Préfecture de Police, 25 Octobre 1912".
[96] Espanet, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 April 1905, p. 4.
[97] R. Péricat, *"Formons des cerveaux"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, February-March 1908, p. 2.
[98] Lefur, L'Ouvrier chapelier, September 1907, p. 3.

In parallel, men's lack of confidence in women's ability to militate was expressed in various ways. Male tobacco workers insisted in particular on their ability to gossip and act like shrews:

> *"Il se trouve des camarades qui se soucient peu de leur syndicat (...) mais elles sont parfois trop énergiques pour soulever des racontars mensongers sur les membres de leur bureau."*[99]

Yet, it has been noticed that in the tobacco industry, when expressed, such views were often qualified by taking into account women's double working days or by believing that, despite their everyday attitude, they would not forget their duties in times of crisis:

> *"Et lorsqu'il s'agit d'une réunion syndicale on a la soupe à faire ou les gosses qui sont à la porte et, si la réunion doit avoir lieu après dîner, c'est que l'on habite trop loin ou que l'on est fatigué (...) Malgré ce désintéressement des réunions, nous savons que le jour où il y aurait danger, tous et toutes, nous vous verrions encore sur les rangs."*[100]

Such an example, combined with what was previously said about women's ability to intervene in political matters, tends to show that, despite instances of a lack of confidence in women, male militants generally adopted a rather positive view on women as militants. During the creation of the Riom union, Estienne noticed that women were even less refractory than men in general[101].

Hatters' lack of confidence was expressed on many occasions too. As was the case in the tobacco industry, women were often accused of joining unions only when their personal interests were at stake and without active participation. As will be seen later in the next chapter, several examples of failures in organising female unions could be mentioned. In addition to the difficulty in organising women, the latter were also presented as incapable of organising themselves without the support of male militants, as shown in the following statement:

> *"On n'a pas grande confiance du reste; les syndicats de femmes n'ont jamais réussi. Un syndicat qui se forme a besoin de l'appui des autres, des anciens, qui sont des syndicats d'hommes."*[102]

Women's indifference to trade unionism was also presented as the cause of unions' lack of interest in matters regarding women, another way of saying that it was women's fault if unions adopted a chauvinistic attitude:

> *"Le syndicat n'est que ce que vous voulez qu'il soit, que ce que tous ses membres veulent qu'il soit. Ce sont ces derniers qui formulent et soumettent au*

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[99] Georges Seille, *"L'insouciance des camarades"*, L'Écho des tabacs, November 1910, p. 4.
[100] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1912, p. 3
[101] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 25.
[102] AN F7 13 881, "Chapellerie: presse 1912 - *"Chez les modistes"*, La Petite République, 5 Avril 1912".

> *patronat les desiderata de tous les adhérents (...) N'étant pas venues à l'organisation, cette dernière n'a donc pu faire pour vous ce qu'elle a fait pour vos camarades hommes. A qui la faute si ce n'est à vous (...) Notre seul souci, à nous, et ce à quoi nous nous attachons, c'est de donner à la femme la place qui lui convient dans la société."*[103]

Such a statement shows the ambiguity of the question this chapter tries to answer. Women's lack of participation in the hat industry could be compared with the chicken and egg story; did this lack come from a lack of interest from women or a lack of interest from male orientated unions? If women were to join unions, unions might do something for them according to their own wish, but in the absence of women, the claims are made according to the male majority, whose ideal vision of woman is that of the housewife and mother, therefore someone who does not need unions. So, in a way, women could be also accused of perpetuating the masculine vision of work and trade unionism by not getting involved in it[104].

Yet hatters were also ready to put some responsibility on men, claiming that the latter should educate and encourage women to struggle instead of being jealous and reinforcing their natural submission:

> *"Les hommes sont jaloux, ils ont peur d'une invasion!"*[105]
> *"Sous prétexte que la femme a dans son rôle particulier les occupations du ménage et l'éducation des enfants, ce qui est juste, puisque conforme à ses aptitudes naturelles, il voudrait la confiner dans le domaine du pot au feu et la tenir éloignée de la vie, des questions sociales primordiales (...) jamais d'explication bienveillante, d'éducation commune. Rien d'étonnant dans la société où tous les efforts (...) sont solidaires, que la femme soit une entrave et un obstacle. A qui la faute, camarades hommes?"*[106]

Despite the blame put on men to explain why women were reluctant to join unions, the paradox is once again clear: how could hatters expect to educate women so that they struggled as workers alongside men and support the notion of the housewife, that is to say the exact opposite of the image of women as workers, at the same time? This shows in fact how deeply rooted paternalistic values were; traditional arguments were used even when men were criticised for reinforcing traditional ideas.

The above statement also shows the importance which was to be given to education in the struggle for the emancipation of workers. If the capitalist order had to be used or transformed to enable women to go back to their natural function as reproducers, mothers and wives,

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[103] C. Michelet, *"Aux ouvrières"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 April 1912, p. 2.
[104] Chapter 3 will show whether their involvement changed anything to this perception of work and trade unionism.
[105] AN F7 13 881, "Chapellerie: presse 1912 - *"Chez les modistes"*, La Petite République, 5 Avril 1912".
[106] L'Ouvier chapelier, 1 May 1906, p. 3.

women had to become aware of their exploitation and willing to do something about it. Such awareness was thought impossible to reach without preliminary education. Yet, such education could only be done by men since women were not educated. In other words, women needed men to educate them, as much as they needed them to form or join unions:

> *"Il importe donc que l'homme éduque la femme (...) Il faut lui apprendre ce que c'est un syndicat, quel est son but, lui expliquer que la misère résulte du mauvais organisme de la société bourgeoise. (...) Ce faisant, il accomplit son devoir, et nul doute qu'il ne parvienne avant peu à faire de sa compagne un être conscient surtout si, aussi souvent que possible, il l'invite à assister aux réunions de propagande toujours si nombreuses, au lieu de l'astreindre à rester au logis."*[107]

There is no evidence that tobacco workers were more educated than hatters. Yet, it has been noticed that the importance of education was more developed among hatters, probably because, as women were in the majority in tobacco workers' unions, the need to educate them was not recognised as a means of attracting them to unions. This suggests a difference in attitude; women's lack of education, or rather their traditional education, was made responsible for their lack of involvement in unions in an industry where they were actually absent from unions, but was hardly taken into consideration when referring to unions including a majority of them. From this comparison, it could therefore be assumed that the traditional education of women was not in itself a cause for their lack of involvement. It is believed that it was rather the way women could be used in unions which would make the difference; if they were recognised as capable of bringing an extra negotiating power, they would be accepted as militants, whatever their education, but if they were originally viewed as a brake to the emancipation of workers, their traditional education would came to be viewed as one reason explaining this braking effect.

This concern for education on hatters' side demonstrates that beyond the need to make women part of the working class lay also the recognition of the great contribution they could make for the emancipation of workers, therefore men. Firstly, they could be used as tools for workers to get what they wanted, either via the image of the state as an model employer, as will be seen later when studying claims among tobacco workers, or via the psychological effect their militancy could have on employers' decisions, as shown on the hatters' side:

> *"Notre émancipation dépend de la femme."*[108]

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[107] Lefur, *"La femme"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, September 1907, p. 3
[108] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 27 April 1890, p. 2.

"Puisque la femme, comprenant son devoir, marche avec nous, la victoire est assurée."[109]
"Il a suffi que nos camarades dames montrent de l'énergie, aidées par leurs camarades hommes, pour qu'immédiatement les patrons mettent les pouces et accordent les réclamations demandées."[110]

Secondly, because women were generally regarded as more passive, their militancy could also have the advantage of standing as a striking example likely to encourage the unionisation and solidarity of other workers, male workers via a sense of guilt or cowardice, female workers via a feeling of feminine solidarity or pride. Thus, during a session of the Central Committee of the tobacco workers' federation in January 1899, Mme Sarzier complained that the last time she went to see the manager a male worker should have come with her. The male delegate Sabaty then replied:

"Il est regrettable de voir que toujours les réclamations sont faites par Mmes Sarzier et Jacoby, pendant qu'il serait plutôt du devoir des hommes de marcher."[111]

The same kind of argument could be found in L'Ouvrier chapelier:

"Ouvrières des départements qui êtes syndiquées, vos compagnes de Paris veulent résolument suivre votre exemple (...) et celles des camarades qui auront connaissance des sacrifices qu'elles s'imposent en vue de ce groupement influera, nous en sommes convaincus, sur la grande quantité d'ouvriers de notre corporation qui laissent réduire chaque jour leur pain avec leur droit et leur liberté."[112]

In addition, thanks to their femininity and natural charms, or their natural function as mothers and wives, women could, in turn, have a tremendous role to play in the education of others, in particular their husbands and children, and in the acquisition of a working class culture and identity. On one side, one could read in L'Écho des tabacs:

"Vous qui savez si bien nous convaincre, qui n'avez qu'à nous sourire pour qu'immédiatement nous nous taisions, qui n'avez qu'un mot à dire pour que nous nous mettions à genoux, comme des esclaves."[113]

On the other side, an article in L'Ouvrier chapelier echoed:

"Qu'elle s'occupe donc bien, elle aussi, des questions sociales, du problème économique et qu'elle stimule (...) le zèle de son mari; (...) qu'elle encourage son mari à lutter, qu'elle l'aide dans sa propagande et qu'elle élève ses enfants dans de mâles idées d'émancipation sociale et de socialisme."[114]

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[109] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 January 1904, p. 3
[110] P. Saunière, *"Victoires ouvrières"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, July-August 1908, p. 1.
[111] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1899, p. 2.
[112] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 January 1893, p. 1.
[113] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1896, p. 2.
[114] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 11 October 1891, p. 1.

The expression *males idées* is to be related to what was previously said about the use of *virilité*[115]. On the one hand, the above statement is to encourage women to participate in the class struggle. Yet, this struggle is defined as male, therefore described in masculine terms, probably to give the image of power and strength. This is to be opposed to the traditional image of feminine weakness. However, it could be argued that by presenting the struggle in such a way, men expected women to use their natural function and yet adopt masculine values, which shows once again that women were to use their natural means to the benefit of a masculine cause.

Despite the difference in the involvement of female workers existing in both industries, the examination of the image of women and working women has revealed the presence of traditional views in both cases, but it has also revealed a rather positive attitude to women's employment and trade unionisation. Both tobacco workers and hatters acknowledged them as workers in the present society, and acknowledged the necessity of unionising them. Variations have been noticed, especially in terms of education, but as a whole these variations were the cause, not the explanation, of the difference in the participation of women in unions. It is true that at this stage, more examples of the paternalistic and chauvinistic attitude of hatters have been shown, but this does not necessarily mean that tobacco workers were more open-minded to the notion of feminism. This is why it seems interesting to go a bit further in the analysis of their attitude to women by examining evidence suggesting the presence of male feminist attitudes in both industries.

It could be expected that the presence of a majority of women in the tobacco industry would influence the perception of their gender in this industry. The central questions would then be: were tobacco workers more open to the woman question and did they offer another alternative to women? A difference must be made between what could have been called a feminist attitude at the time and a traditional, but not necessarily negative, attitude to women. Adopting a paternalistic attitude does not necessarily mean adopting a negative attitude to women; the relativity of the term negative must be related to what women would actually regard as being negative. The complexity of the meaning of feminism at the time will be examined in more depth in the next chapter. Yet, for the time being, a feminist attitude will be described as an attitude showing a belief in women's equal status or at least a wish for their

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[115] See p. 101.

emancipation as women, without considering the position of women regarding this notion of emancipation.

Examples of such attitudes from male militants have been found in both industries. During the 1894 tobacco workers' congress one could hear the following encouraging words, followed by a burst of applause:

> *"En ce qui concerne la femme, nous pensons qu'il faut lui donner les mêmes droits (...). Quand la femme veut réellement s'occuper d'affaires, elle n'est pas inférieure à l'homme, tant s'en faut. Nous espérons donc (...) que petit à petit, elles conquerront tous les autres droits qui, jusqu'à présent, ont été, on ne sait trop pourquoi, l'apanage du sexe masculin."*[116]

The above statement could have echoed the following one found in L'Ouvrier chapelier as early as 1893:

> *"Nous croyons utile d'apporter notre concours à cette importante question de l'émancipation de la femme, qui fait partie intégrante de la question sociale (...) L'éducation faussée de la femme est due plus en partie aux hommes qui, jusqu'à ce jour, ont imposé l'esclavage de la femme à leurs appétits, jamais assouvis. (...) L'affranchissement de la femme sera le triomphe de l'humanité sur la barbarie qui nous gouverne tous."*[117]

These two statements show that, in both cases, there was an awareness of women's exploitation due to their gender and of the need to change their situation. Yet, one may wonder what was beyond this awareness and this wish to emancipate women. This is why it seems interesting to go a bit further in the study of this wish to see what men actually meant by emancipating women in the socialist society. The following statements, made by Lelorrain from the tobacco workers' federation, are good illustrations of the place that should be allocated to women in such a society:

> *"Nous voulons l'égalité de la femme, parce que, nous autres militants, nous considérons que pour arriver à l'affranchissement du prolétariat, ce n'est qu'avec l'aide, la bonne volonté, le courage et l'énergie de la femme que nous arriverons à l'émancipation des travailleurs."*[118]
>
> *"Le jour où vous aurez compris que votre place n'est plus dans les ateliers, mais qu'elle est au foyer conjugal, alors citoyennes, si vous avez des mioches, vous pourrez consacrer tout votre temps à leur éducation, et les élever dans la voie socialiste progressiste, au lieu de leur apprendre à se courber devant le patronat."*[119]

The first statement shows clearly that Lelorrain was in favour of the equal status for women. Yet, as reflected in the second statement, this equality meant their return to home so that they

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[116] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, op. cit., pp. 153-154.
[117] V. D., *"L'émancipation des femmes devant le prolétariat"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 4 June 1893, p. 1.
[118] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1896, p. 4.
[119] Ibid.

could educate their children in the name of the emancipation of the whole working class, therefore was based on the recognition of the different roles attributed to men and women in society. As attested below, he did not envisage a shift in these roles:

> *"Si la journée était diminuée (...), il serait permis aux ouvrières de vaquer au soins du ménage, et nous, les hommes, nous pourrions nous donner la nourriture intellectuelle."*[120]

When defending women's rights, Lelorrain still believed in the traditional family responsibilities, with the woman doing the housework while the man would take some time to read a paper or relax.

The question is now to examine whether hatters adopted a similar attitude when preaching in favour of women's emancipation. At least two different kinds of answers were found. The first one is to be directly compared to the one above, with the idea that the only salvation for women was in their return to home so that they could devote their life to their primary natural functions:

> *"Aussi combien heureux sommes nous lorsque nous voyons la femme relever la tête pour chercher (...) une transformation sociale (...) qui donnera à remplir à la femme le rôle que lui assigne la nature et qui la libérera enfin de l'esclavage moral et matériel sous lequel elle courbe l'échine depuis si longtemps."*[121]

The second kind of answer referred to the need of women to stand up for their rights, but showed a limit to their power to do so on their own:

> *"Domestiquée à l'atelier par les patrons, la femme est chez elle asservie par son mari qui le plus souvent ne la considère que comme une machine à faire chauffer le café ou à raccommoder les chaussettes. Cet esclavage que vous subissez depuis des siècles ne cessera que quand vous aurez conscience qu'ayant les même obligations que les hommes vous devez avoir les même droits. Les organisations syndicales peuvent seules vous libérer de cet esclavage."*[122]

Unions were thus shown as a means to emancipate women in relation to their gender. Yet, it is known that hatter's unions were dominated by men. The idea was that men should be responsible for their liberation, in the same way as they should be responsible for their education and unionisation, which is in some way ironic. Of course, the above statement also recognised the need for men to change their chauvinistic attitude to women, but at the same time, by denying women's power to emancipate themselves, it showed their inferior position to men. Consequently, it appears that the way to the emancipation of women had to pass by the

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[120] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1898, p. 3.
[121] *"Les femmes et le socialisme"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 29 December 1895, p. 3.
[122] AN F7 13 881, "Chapellerie, 1912 - *"Réunion organisée par le Syndicat des Modistes de Paris"*, Préfecture de Police, 15 Octobre 1912".

prolongation of their inferior status in relation to men, which seems in itself rather paradoxical. So, one may wonder if the above statement was not simply another demagogic way of attracting women to unions by sounding sympathetic to their cause, but revealing at the same time a deeply rooted chauvinistic attitude, in the same way the previous, clearly paternalistic examples did[123]. This idea is backed up by the fact that only one case of the need for the redistribution of social roles was found coming from a man in L'Ouvrier chapelier. When Faberot went to Parliament to argue that workers with a rail card should be allowed to take the train at any time of the day, he gave the following argument to convince the audience:

> *"S'il leur était permis de prendre un train dans l'après midi, il leur serait possible, en l'absence de leur femme, de préparer la soupe des enfants et de vaquer aux soins du ménage."*[124]

As a whole, both the tobacco workers and hatters appear to have developed the idea that women's emancipation was dependent upon the adoption, or acceptance, of traditional values one way or another, thus denying the right for women to adopt values not recognised by men as being feminine. Yet, by encouraging them to join unions, they also expected women to adopt traditionally masculine values. So when serving the cause of trade unionism, women were expected to adopt masculine values, but they had to stick to their so called feminine nature when serving their cause as women. So, in both cases, the presence of a positive attitude to women, in terms of gender, employment and militancy, did not lead to a wish to transform their position in relation to men in either industry.

The awareness of any situation is indispensable if one is to amend the situation, but it does not necessarily lead to its amendment if the situation is thought acceptable according to pre-determined norms. Thus, even feminist ideas which could have been used to give other perspectives to women workers as women were used in an demagogic way to serve what could be regarded nowadays as anti-feminist purposes. Yet, as will be seen in the following chapter, it has to be envisaged that the meaning of feminism was not the same at the time and that it evolved in accordance to the evolution of women's position in society and their own point of view on the matter.

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[123] Chapter 3 will examine how women responded to this attitude. See in particular p. 169.
[124] *"Nos camarades au Parlement"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 16 May 1897, p. 3.

Unions and their claims

The theoretical background regarding women in both industries has been examined through the content of articles regarding women in both federative papers. A quantitative imbalance has been noticed between L'Écho des tabacs and L'Ouvrier chapelier. Yet it is believed that because women were in the majority in tobacco workers' unions, these unions had passed the stage when they should concentrate on theory; they had to deal with women in a practical way. Claims represented what unions aimed to achieve in the present society in a practical sense, as opposed to theory. It could be assumed that women would feel more attracted to unions which would treat them on the same footing as men or which would take their specific needs into consideration and reflect these needs in their claims. This is why studying claims in both federations seems another good way to try to assess, and qualify, the differences that existed.

When looking at hatters' national congresses, it would appear that the above assumption can easily be made in so far as none of their claims related specifically to women. Yet, according to Marie-Louise Compain, they had a rather positive attitude to their female fellow workers, at least in terms of wages:

> *"Les chapeliers sont-ils féministes? L'ouvrier féministe est rare mais aucun syndicat n'a une conduite plus correcte à l'égard de l'ouvrière. Elle y est traitée sur le même pied que l'ouvrier. La devise à travail égal, salaire égal est loyalement appliquée: une couseuse de paille est payée autant qu'un couseur."*[125]

As seen in Chapter 1, it is true that the practice of equal pay for equal work was found on several occasions. Yet, the above statement represents the vision of an outsider, so the question is whether the same could be said when considering what was going on on the inside. In a way, it would be tempting to say that, in terms of wages and rights as workers, hatters tended to consider their fellow workers on a equal footing, or at least they tried to give this impression, as attested below:

> *"Les bourgeois protestent quand nous demandons l'égalité de la femme (...) à égalité de travail, égalité de salaire pour les deux sexes; à égalité de devoirs sociaux, nous demandons égalité de droits."*[126]
>
> *"L'homme comme la femme veut pouvoir vivre du produit de son travail et rien ne me parait plus juste."*[127]

Yet, this equality had also its limits, and the image of equal pay was also, in some cases, used as an attempt to send women back to their home:

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[125] Marie-Louise Compain, La Femme dans les organisations ouvrières, Paris, Giard et Brière,1910, p. 30.
[126] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 27 April 1890, p. 2.
[127] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 26 July 1896, p. 1.

"L'ouvrière doit s'associer aux revendications des ouvriers, et, en attendant de reprendre sa place au foyer domestique, elle doit faire en sorte de ne travailler que moyennant le salaire de l'ouvrier."[128]

The whole idea of increased wages for women itself was not to be dissociated from the idea that such wages would make female workers become better mothers and better women as a whole:

"Lorsque la femme aura un travail assuré, lorsque non plus mise en concurrence avec l'homme elle aura un salaire lui permettant de vivre honorablement, elle ne demandera qu'à trouver un bon compagnon, à avoir de beaux enfants qui seront alors la joie et la gaieté de la maison et l'on verra vivement la prostitution diminuer."[129]

The way such elements as wages, motherhood and prostitution are linked shows to what extent the traditional notions defining women, such as maternity and morality, prevailed over the notion of their employment even when they were defined as workers deserving equal status with men.

A closer and critical look at tobacco workers' claims revealed that to a certain extent, and despite their undeniable concern for women, they reflected, in a practical way, the same prejudices as revealed in the theoretical articles of L'Ouvrier chapelier.

Tobacco workers developed at least three different strategies to guarantee their success[130]. It has already been seen that they were aware that they had to keep the right balance between what they wanted and what would be regarded as acceptable by public opinion and the state. Thanks to their status, they also tended to justify their claims by using the image of the model employer, standing as the defenders of the whole working class and claiming that what they would get would eventually benefit to the rest of the workers in the name of the nation:

"Le devoir du gouvernement est d'empêcher les veillées, il le faut pour la santé de tous."[131]

"Estimant que ce n'est pas trop demander que de faire appel à des mesures plus humanitaires pour nous, ouvrier de l'État, dont le devoir est de donner l'exemple en donnant plus de bien être à ses ouvriers."[132]

In addition, they came to use the fact that the majority of their workforce was female to influence politicians and the decisions taken at the top of the state. Their argument was quite

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[128] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 11 October 1891, p. 1.
[129] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 4 April 1897, p. 4.
[130] For further information on all the claims made by the federation before 1902, see: Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 344-367.
[131] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1897.
[132] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, op. cit., p. 85.

clear, and not surprising considering the way they regarded their employer; as the latter presented itself as the defender of the weak, it was its duty to improve the conditions of women in the tobacco industry, which could have a certain impact at a time when women were seen as the social element to be protected in the name of the nation against depopulation. Such was the case for their demand of the *semaine anglaise*:

> *"C'est pour la femme, sur qui pèse à la fin de la journée, toutes les fatigues du ménage, que l'État-patron aurait dû manifester cet acte d'humanité rationnel (...) pour lui permettre de pouvoir consacrer plus de temps aux soins du ménage et de ses enfants, de faire ses achats le samedi après midi, et mettre en application la loi sur le repos hebdomadaire que l'État rend pour elle inapplicable."*[133]

The same argument was used when referring to paid annual leave. According to the regulation on leave before 1911, both men and women had to work at least 250 days a year to be entitled to get leave. In 1911, the federation asked successfully this number to be reduced to 200 days for women, claiming:

> *"La direction générale devrait faciliter l'accomplissement des devoirs des femmes occupées dans ses ateliers; bon nombre d'ouvrières sont dans l'obligation de s'absenter de l'atelier pour soins à donner aux enfants, une fois au moins par semaine pour les soins du ménage, souvent pour soigner soit le mari ou un parent."*[134]

This awareness of the asset women could represent in the potential success of claims made the federation use women very often to justify the need for improvements when facing their employer.

Several types of claims could be found when referring to women. As women were in the majority in unions, some claims were specifically aimed at them and their needs. Thus, they claimed at their 1904 congress, that women should get 50F instead of 30F when giving birth and that the period of cover should be extended to a month instead of 20 days[135]. In the same way, as early as their first congress in 1891, it was decided that crèches should be opened in every factory and be put under the control of unions[136]. Their justification was quite clear:

> *"N'est-il pas inhumain de tolérer (...) que cette mère (...) fût obligée d'allaiter son enfant sous une voûte, dans les courants d'air, et par quelque saison que ce soit. Comment est-il possible que dans une administration de l'État, où tous*

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[133] B. Barlet, *"La semaine anglaise"*, L'Écho des tabacs, May 1911, p. 2.
[134] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1911, p. 6.
L'Écho des tabacs, December 1911, p. 6.
[135] L'Humanité, 22 June 1904, p. 3.
[136] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., p. 15.

les grands maîtres crient tous les jours à la dépopulation, l'on ait toléré pendant si longtemps une telle iniquité."[137]

In other cases, the federation would make a claim in the name of women hoping that it would eventually get extended to all the workers in the industry. Thus, during the discussion on starting time at their 1891 congress, both male and female delegates demanded workers to be allowed to enter the factory 15 minutes later *"de façon à permettre aux mères de famille de remplir leur devoir"*[138]. The same could be said about pensions. During the 1901 congress, it was decided that if the decrease in the retirement age was refused for both genders, priority should be given to women, claiming that *"il est du devoir de tous les ouvriers de défendre et de protéger les intérêts de la femme avant tout"*[139]. Their law counsellor made it clear that it was in their own interest to ask for this improvement only for women at first because this would guarantee their chance of success. The argument was that once they got it in the name of the defence of women, they could then ask it to be extended to men in the name of equality. However, the above example shows that the notion of equality between genders could be used in a strategic way, especially when it was in the men's advantage to do so. Another series of claims referred to women but not specifically to them, and it appears that when it was in the long term interest of men to give priority to women, the word equality would be often used. But when men did not have anything to gain in the long term by defending women, the notion of equality lost its relevance.

The case of wages was a good illustration of this changing attitude towards women and equality. At the 1907 congress, Ballereau, from Châteauroux, declared that men should not get less than 5F and women 3.25F, considering that women did not necessarily have husbands to support them[140]. In 1912, the section of Nancy adopted a minimum average wage of 7.25F for men and 5.25F for women[141]. This shows that, despite the fact that they recognised the need for women to get decent wages for them to be economically independent, they still approved of the gender difference in wages. Furthermore, at the 1909 congress it was decided that only men should be working in hydraulic packaging, and that wages should be increased accordingly. Although this work concerned the manipulation of machines, men were not ready to accept women's wages. Barlet, from Lyons, mentioned as an outrage the case of a man

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[137] Ibid., pp. 43-44.
[138] Ibid., p. 13.
[139] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1901, p. 4.
[140] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1908, p. 5.
[141] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1912, p. 3.

whose wage had not been increased after he took over from a woman[142]. The notion of equal pay for equal work was therefore far from being on the agenda. Only Lelorrain asked for it at the 1891 congress[143]. This could be interpreted as the sign of an acceptance of equality, but Lelorrain made his intentions clear; once again this acceptance had to be interpreted as a way to reduce women's employment and facilitate their return to home:

> *"Nous, socialistes, nous disons que la femme a été faite pour être la compagne de l'homme; sa place n'est pas dans une manufacture. C'est elle qui doit donner à la France des enfants forts et robustes, sa place est au foyer conjugal pour veiller à ses enfants, à l'entretien de son intérieur. Nous voulons ainsi qu'elle soit l'égale de l'homme, au point de vue des salaires."*[144]

Even when adopting what could be called a feminist approach at first sight, equal pay for both genders, Lelorrain reproduced the traditional image of the woman as mother and housewife, thus denying her equal productive capacity. By denying this capacity, he did nothing but use the argument that was commonly given to justify gender differences in wages. How could he expect to justify equal pay in such a way? This example shows that even in an industry where women were not viewed as competitors, their role as producers was admittedly acknowledged, but not on an equal basis, because the fundamental vision of their social role remained the same.

The same could be said when referring to pensions and other benefits. The federation originally asked for 600F a year for men against 400F for women. Later militants asked respectively for 720F and 540F[145]. In terms of accidents at work, in 1891, the Dieppe union decided to give 5 to 6F to men and 2.5 to 3F to women[146]. In cases of illness, during its 1904 congress, the federation asked for 2.5F for men and 1.90F for women in the Seine department, and respectively 2F and 1.50F for the other factories[147]. So, as a whole, they promoted equality of benefits between factories and regions, but rarely mentioned the fact that women got less, which shows once again that they finally accepted that women were not equal workers.

Other examples are worth mentioning to see the extent of such a self-interested attitude, indirectly corresponding to either a wish to expel women from work or to the traditional

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[142] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1910, pp. 8-9.
[143] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., p. 71.
[144] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1899, p. 2.
[145] *"Congrès des ouvrières et ouvrier des tabacs"*, L'Humanité, 26 June 1906, p. 2.
[146] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., p. 58.
[147] L'Humanité, 22 June 1904, p. 3.

image of women. During the 1891 congress, it was decided that women should be replaced by men in the workshop dealing with the moistening of tobacco because this job was regarded as unhealthy[148]. Yet, during the 1897 congress, several delegates proposed that the decision should be taken by women considering the fact that some of them were quite happy with working in these workshops[149]. Therefore, one may wonder if the concern about women's health did not conceal a wish to replace them as workers, thus limiting their perspectives and encouraging in a long term their return to the home. This idea is reinforced by the fact that claims related to women's health and hygiene were often presented as a necessity not to endanger their procreative capacity. Thus, as early as 1891, Lelorrain suggested the installation of bathrooms in all the factories so that all workers could have a bath at least once a month and workers working in dirty workshops and pregnant women at least twice *"de façon à permettre que l'enfant venant au monde, ne soit pas atteint de cette inflammation que l'on constate à chaque naissance".*[150]

The same kind of argument was used to justify in 1898 the need for the 10 hour working day:

> *"Le Comité central affirme que dix heures passées dans des ateliers malsains est plus que suffisant pour détruire la santé de la femme, la mettant dans l'impossibilité de donner à la France des enfants sains et robustes."*[151]

This traditional vision of women was all the more obvious when considering the argument they used to justify a decrease in working hours in all its form, be they annual leave or the *semaine anglaise*:

> *"Le congé annuel payé, ce sera la possibilité à la mère de mener ses enfants à la campagne, de passer auprès d'eux quelques jours à les soigner, les fortifier, les surveiller."*[152]
>
> *"Revendiquons la semaine anglaise pour rendre la femme à son foyer le samedi après midi. Nous aurons la satisfaction d'avoir fait franchir un grand pas à notre évolution en nous rapprochant de notre idéal: l'émancipation totale de tous les travailleurs."*[153]

This last statement in particular could not be clearer: female labour had to be limited also in time to enable them to perform their duties as women, thus contributing to the emancipation of the whole working class, which is exactly what was said about hatters[154]. So, despite their

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[148] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., pp. 72, 78.
[149] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1898, p. 4.
[150] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Premier congrès tenu du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, op. cit., p. 78.
[151] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1898, p. 1.
[152] L. Mallardé, *"Le congé annuel"*, L'Écho des tabacs, August 1908, p. 1.
[153] Siette, *"La semaine anglaise"*, L'Écho des tabacs, February 1914, p. 5.
[154] Hatters' views on the *Semaine anglaise* did not differ from tobacco workers' in the sense that they too believed that this measure would allow women to spend more time to do their housework. For further

apparent concern for women and their wish to meet their needs, tobacco workers were under the influence of the same deeply rooted ideology which prevented them, consciously or unconsciously, from seeing any other alternative for women. So, whether or not claims were presented as being in favour of women workers, their finality was the same; they were all to serve a "just", therefore paternalistic, cause. This shows once again the way women could be used in a demagogic way to the benefit of men's position in society as a whole.

Unions and women's unionisation

In the same way as it was assumed that women would feel more attracted to unions which would take into account their needs in their claims, it could be assumed that they would feel more attracted to those which would target them in particular or take into consideration their specificity. This is why it appears crucial to examine the different arguments used in union campaigns as well as the way in which women were taken into account in the elaboration of union statutes and policies.

In the tobacco industry, campaigns for the unionisation of women were limited in time in so far as the majority came to unions promptly. Women's high participation rate was used as a weapon by male militants on a regular basis and catch phrases, such as *"Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut"*[155] or *"Une femme vaut deux hommes"*[156] were found on various occasions. The use of such catch phrases referring to women's will power or moral strength demonstrates once again that the characteristics of women were presented in a positive way when the need to keep them motivated and keen to support the whole movement arose.

As opposed to the tobacco industry, campaigns for the trade unionisation of women in the hat industry was a permanent feature of the hatters' federation's activity throughout the period, to respond to women's lack of involvement in this industry. It must be noticed however that campaigns accelerated after the late 1900s to target milliners specifically[157], as if everything possible had been done for women hatters and a new step further had to be taken to include milliners. Several arguments were then used to attract the latter. First of all, women had to overcome their prejudices against the masculine image of unions:

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information, see: Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Quinzième congrès national, tenu à Bort, du 22 au 27 juillet 1912, op. cit., p. 83.

[155] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, op. cit., p. 212.

[156] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1898, p. 2.

[157] It must be borne in mind that most milliners were women.

"Il est recommandé à tous les sociétaires correspondants d'inviter les camarades dames à adhérer au syndicat local. Une propagande suivie doit être faite en ce sens, car beaucoup de ces camarades croient que les syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie n'acceptent que des hommes et qu'ils n'ont été institués que pour eux."[158]

They also had to put an end to their prejudices against getting involved in unions:

"La femme de l'ouvrier doit faire son devoir. Ce n'est pas parce qu'elle s'occupera de politique, comme on dit, c'est à dire de ses droits, de ceux de son mari et de ses enfants, qu'elle aura un minois moins charmant, des grâces moins séduisantes et un esprit moins délicat."[159]

"Ouvrières, mes compagnes, adhérez donc à la société locale des ouvrières de votre industrie (...) N'écoutez pas ceux et celles qui vous disent: c'est indigne d'une femme ou une jeune fille de fréquenter les réunions de sociétés ouvrières!"[160]

These two statements are particularly interesting in the sense that they use the traditional image of women as wives, mothers, naturally charming, delicate and virtuous, to justify the need to join unions, although it was regarded as unconventional for a woman to join. It could be said that once again such an image was used as a demagogic tool and reflected female stereotypes. But it could also be argued that it was used so that women could relate to them. By using arguments related to women's femininity and natural characteristics, it is believed that unions were more likely to attract women than if they had used arguments related to masculine values. This is why it is also believed that the mention of virility and male ideas that have been examined before were awkward because more likely to accentuate the prejudices women had against unions.

In addition to abandoning their prejudices, women had to be reassured that they would be supported by men:

"Quand nos camarades dames seront assurées qu'elles seront soutenues..."[161]

"Vous n'ignorez pas que l'union fait la force (...) Si, comprenant tout cela, vous pensez qu'il est un remède possible à ce mal, le syndicat tient constamment ses portes ouvertes et se met à votre disposition pour vous recevoir et vous donner tous renseignements utiles."[162]

They also had to be shown that unions could do something for them as women. Thus the milliners' union's aims were presented as follows:

"L'organisation a un but précis; l'émancipation et la libération de la femme (...) relever le niveau moral de notre milieu, (...) faire cesser les injustices, les passe-droits, le favoritisme et les salaires dérisoires."[163]

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[158] L'Ouvrier chapelier, February-March 1911, p. 1.
[159] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 11 October 1891, p. 1.
[160] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 18 December 1892, p. 3.
[161] Pierre et Paul, *"Libérons la femme"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 March 1912, p. 3.
[162] L'Ouvrier chapelier, February-March 1910, p. 3.
[163] L'Ouvrier chapelier, December 1912, p. 3.

So, according to all these examples it could be said that, when the time to target women in a practical way came, hatters came to acknowledge their specificity and used it as an argument to which women could relate, in the same way tobacco workers did with their claims. Whether they used this argument in an interested way or as a genuine mark of recognition is debatable. Yet, at this stage this shows that hatters were not reluctant to welcome women on their side. Therefore, in practice, they could not be held as totally responsible for women's lack of involvement.

In a way, the same could be said when looking at unions' statutes and regulations. The example of the book industry has shown that women were not likely to feel close to a class orientated movement which refused to accept them in its ranks on an equal footing with men, or in a way that would make it easy for women to join. Yet, decisions were to come from congresses, therefore the top, and, as will be seen in Chapter 3, the top was not necessarily where women were, even in the case of the tobacco industry. Therefore, any consideration of the way federations dealt with women in terms of statutes and regulations must be viewed as a good indicator of a wish, or lack of it, to integrate women. Considering the fact that women were in the majority in tobacco workers' unions, it could be assumed that their federation adapted to their needs more than the federation of hatters would to its female workers. This assumption has now to be confronted with the facts.

By 1890, both federations accepted women in their ranks, so the explanation of the difference must be found somewhere else. The tobacco workers' federation included women straight away and this does not seem to have caused any problematic debates. In terms of subscriptions the latter amounted to 10c a month for men and 5c for women in 1892[164]. Such a difference was made in recognition of the gender difference in wages. Yet, this created tension in terms of what women should get in relation to benefits allocated by unions. Consequently, the subscription was changed to 5c a month for both genders at the 1894 congress[165]. The federation therefore recognised the inequality in wages and brought its subscription into line with it, but as already shown, this did not lead to a wish to unify wages, pensions and other benefits. The same could be said about the financial support offered by unions; women paid the same subscription, but did not get the same amount as men. In case of a strike for instance,

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[164] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 216.

[165] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs de France, Troisième congrès, tenu à Paris du 4 au 12 juin 1894, op. cit., p. 158.

men originally got 2F a day, as opposed to 1F50 for women[166]. So, the federation accepted the inequality of remuneration at work and reproduced it in its statutes, thus showing the consensus that could exist between men and women in terms of the lower status women had as producers and the acceptance of their lesser needs[167].

Although hatters expressed their wish to organise women and to accept them in their federation in 1883, it is not before 1884 that they were actually accepted in the *Société générale*[168]. The question of subscription for men and women remained a problematic issue for the federation for a long time. As early as 1889, two parties were to be found: those in favour of equality, claiming that the principle of equal subscription for equal rights should be applied as should that of equal pay for equal work. On the other hand were those, especially women, who believed that as long as women would not get the same in practice, they could not be asked to pay the same subscription[169]. Furthermore, it would be unfair in the sense that they tended to move far less often than men who consequently got extra benefits when leaving and arriving in a different locality. The latter originally won over the former and during the 1903 congress, it was voted that men should pay 0.25F per week, and women 0.15F[170]. Yet, according to the third article of the statutes published in 1909, the subscription was at this time 0.15F per week for every member earning more than 7F[171]. This indicates that not only had the gender difference disappeared, but also that low wages, therefore women in particular, were taken into consideration at the same time. This egalitarian approach between genders was reinforced by the fact that women received the same amount of money as men in terms of benefits[172].

Equality in treatment was also to be found at a local level. Thus, the subscription to the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Quillan* was of

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[166] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 317.
This allowance was decreased to respectively 1.50F and 1F in the early 1900s.

[167] Statutes had to be approved by the congress. As congresses included a number of female delegates, it could be assumed that the majority agreed with such statutes.

[168] It is interesting to notice that this date corresponds to the legalisation of unions. One may wonder if this also corresponds to a belief among hatters that women would represent a threat to illegal unions or that they should not get involved in illegal activities.

[169] Société générale des ouvriers chapeliers de France, Congrès national et intenational tenu à Paris les 14, 15 et 16 juillet 1889, Paris, Imprimerie du Prolétariat, 1889, p. 45.

[170] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Douzième congrès national, tenu à Albi, du 17 au 22 juillet 1903, Paris, Imprimerie Rigaux, 1903, pp. 25-26.

[171] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Quatorzième congrès national, tenu à Espéraza, du 19 au 24 juillet 1909, op. cit., p. 2

[172] Ibid., p. 5.

0.25F for both genders in 1907. Furthermore, according to an extract of article 77 of the statutes of the *Chambre syndicale parisienne des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie réunis*:

> *"Le syndicat (...) étant composé d'ouvriers et ouvrières, toutes les ouvrières en chapellerie seront admises à faire partie de la chambre syndicale. Elles auront les mêmes droits et les mêmes obligations que les hommes."*[173]

Yet, this equality had some limits, firstly, in terms of practice and, secondly, in terms of interpretation. Examples of local unions practising inequality in terms of subscription and benefits were also found: in the Chazelles union in 1892, the unemployment found was supported by subscriptions of 0.30F per fortnight for men against 0.20F for women, and the strike found by subscriptions of 0.15F per fortnight for men against 0.10F for women[174]. According to the 1906 statutes of the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Belfort,* all the members were supposed to be *"égaux en droit devant les statuts"*, but the subscription was 0.80F every two weeks for men (including 0.30F for the federation) as opposed to 0.40F for women (including 0.20F for the federation). Unemployment benefits amounted 7F for men against 5F for women per week, strike benefits 10 F for men and 7F for women and fines for not attending the general meeting amounted 1F for men against 0.5F for women[175].

As shown above, both federations eventually adopted the system of equal subscription. Yet, equality in subscriptions and benefits could result in being unfair in the same way as obvious inequality could. As a principle, it could be regarded as unfair for women to pay a lower subscription and getting lower benefits because it reveals their lower status as workers. Nonetheless, in practice, it must be borne in mind that women actually got lower wages. Therefore, when considering the average wage of women in the industry and the fact that they usually got half a male wage, it could be said that equal subscriptions put relatively twice as much financial pressure on women. This tends to prove that a link can be made between financial constraints and women's lack of participation in unions, all the more so when comparing the situation in the hat and the tobacco industries. The striking element of the comparison is the difference in subscription in both federations: 0.05F a month versus 0.60F. It has been impossible to calculate the proportion such subscription represented in both industries in relation to women's wages, but it is known that women hatters generally earned

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[173] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 4 December 1892, p. 4.
[174] Rapport du huitième congrès national des ouvriers chapeliers de France, tenu à Aix, du 13 au 18 juillet 1892, Paris, Imprimerie Jean Allemane, 1892, p. 54.
[175] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, "Carton 10 - Fédération de la chapellerie, Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Belfort, statuts 1906, pp. 8,10,12,14,15".

less than female tobacco workers, therefore it could be assumed that, financially speaking, being a member of their federation represented a greater sacrifice for female hatters[176]. So, as assumed in Chapter 1, it can be said that the difference in women's involvement in both federations was partly explained by a difference in the financial impact trade unionisation had for women in both industries.

Now that the role of subscriptions has been established, it seems interesting to examine whether tobacco workers' and hatters' unions adopted different measures to take into account women's double working day and lack of time, which were two arguments usually given to explain their reluctance to trade unionism. In fact, examples of such measures were found in both cases. Thus, in October 1900, the commission of the Lille tobacco workers' union voted the following proposal:

> *"La commission, considérant qu'un grand nombre d'entre vous, étant mères de famille et devant, la journée de labeur terminée à l'atelier, veiller à l'entretien des enfants, et ne pouvant assister aux assemblées générales répétées trop souvent, vous a demandé plein pouvoir pour prendre les décisions nécessaires au bien et au bon fonctionnement de l'organisation."*[177]

Such a measure however does not offer any alternative to women; it just aims at adjusting the organisation of the union to the fact that women were often absent at meetings, without trying to make their attendance easier nor calling into question the reasons why women could not attend these meetings. It shows once again that it was women who had to adapt to serve the cause of unions, not the other way round.

According to the example given by the Chazelles union, it appears that the same could be said about hatters. They, too, took into account the fact that women lacked of time to attend meetings. Thus in 1909 the union rejected a proposal which aim was to make women's attendance at meetings compulsory[178]. This did not prevent them from voting a few months later another proposal aimed at fining any woman who would not attend general meetings[179]. They eventually reviewed their position in July 1912 when the following was decided:

> *"Que toutes les camarades dames assistent aux assemblées générales pour être au courant des questions syndicales. Les mères de famille ou toutes femmes qui ont un intérieur ou qui pour une raison valable, ne pourront assister aux assemblées, auront une excuse."*[180]

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[176] It must be borne in mind that they also had to pay subcriptions to their local union to be part of the federation.

[177] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1900, p. 2.

[178] L'Ouvrier chapelier, January-February 1909, p. 3.

[179] L'Ouvrier chapelier, July-August 1909, p. 4.

[180] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 August 1912, p. 3.

The acceptance of the double working day could not be clearer in both cases, which confirms what was previously said about unions' general attitude to women's position in society.

Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the characteristics of male militants and unions in relation to women to see whether these characteristics could explain the difference existing in women's participation in unions in both industries. Numerous hypotheses were made but, as opposed to Chapter 1, only a few proved to be relevant and play a role in explaining the difference, such as the image of the state as a model employer, the influence of mass movements, the implications of the reformist attitude chosen by tobacco workers and the impact of subscriptions. Keeping the title of this study in mind, the limits of the difference between the two industries have started to appear throughout this chapter, especially in terms of the way women were perceived and treated, and what was expected from them. This was particularly clear when comparing the theoretical image of women among hatters with the claims made by tobacco workers: both revealed a deeply rooted paternalistic and chauvinistic vision of the organisation of society as a whole. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to conclude that women did not join unions in the hat industry to the same extent as in the tobacco industry because hatters adopted a more chauvinistic attitude to women. In turn, the present study has shown that the assumption that male attitude to women and the masculine orientation of unions were major factors in shaping women's participation in unions was not to be applied to any industry, or at least not in a systematic way. Such an assumption actually depends on the way women reacted to this attitude. Two options are available; either it was accepted, and in this case, it cannot be held responsible for their lack of involvement; or it was rejected and therefore can explain women's refractory attitude. In this connection, it has been seen that despite their majority of women, tobacco workers' unions were no exception when the time to deal with the woman question came. They were convinced that because work deprived women of their womanhood, the only way for them to regain this womanhood was by encouraging their return to the home. The female function as workers was therefore to militate to be able to improve the possibility of protecting women's natural function and allow them to regain a bit of this lost womanhood. Yet, if the notion of womanhood was the same for both genders, could this kind of chauvinistic and paternalistic claims be regarded as a deterrent to women's participation?

It has been suggested in various parts of this chapter that men often used female workers in a strategic way to serve their own masculine interests. This cannot be denied, but it does not necessarily mean that they did not have any consideration for women's needs. It would be too easy to criticise male chauvinism as the only factor to explain their paternalistic attitude. There are always two sides to a story, and the interpretation of facts always depends on which side one decides to stand. It seems that the only alternative men offered to women was to allow them to spend more time at home, therefore reducing their role as producers, without taking into account the fact that, fundamentally speaking, reducing this role could also mean reducing the reason why women should join unions. However, the use of *could mean* as opposed to *meant* seems very appropriate in this case. An assertive statement would indeed tend to forget the other half of the story: women. If women were to accept the traditional place allocated to them in society, they would not reject the use of unions as a means of facilitating their return to the home, therefore they would not deny the use of unions as a whole nor call into question their paternalistic orientations[181].

A *député* from Nice once used these terms to described the attitude of male militants in the tobacco workers federation:

> *"Vous avez compris où se trouvait la force réelle de la société, et vous avez associé la femme à vos travaux. En les associant à vos réclamations, vous avez fait acte de justice en même temps que vous avez donné un rude appoint."*[182]

By deciding to stand on a male, chauvinistic side, this *député* put forward the good side of men wishing to associate women with the working class cause, but a modern, radical feminist version would probably insist on their masculine hypocrisy and the unfairness of such an association. Yet, it is believed that no side can be taken without considering how female tobacco workers in this case perceived their conditions as women and men's attitude to them at the time. It can indeed be envisaged that men's plea for women to return to their home was not aimed against women, if women agreed with it. Furthermore, one must keep in mind the actual definition of a union; to protect and defend the interests of its members as workers, and like any democratic system it should rely on and give priority to its majority. So, it could be said that there is nothing wrong in adopting fundamentally male chauvinistic views in unions provided that such views correspond to the wish of the majority and do not prevent women from militating if they wish to, as was certainly the case in the tobacco industry. Such views

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[181] See Chapter 3 for further analysis, in particular pp. 169-175.

[182] Fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures des tabacs de France, Deuxième congrès tenu du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 182.

become wrong when they come to prevent women from militating as workers because of their gender, as was the case in the book industry for instance. However, it has been shown that such was not the case in the hat industry, so the fact that women held responsibility in their non-intervention cannot be discarded. Consequently, it could be assumed that if chauvinistic attitudes were not the main reason to explain women's participation, or lack of it, in the case of these two federations, it is probably because women also accepted and adopted these attitudes, and if they did not join unions in federations who encouraged their membership, it was also because of their attitude to trade unionism. These two assumptions are now to be confronted with facts, which is one of the purposes of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3:

WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONISM

Whereas Chapter 1 has demonstrated that the characteristics of both industries played a substantial role in the huge difference existing between the quantitative representation of women in tobacco workers' unions and hatter's unions, the previous chapter has shown that the attitude of unions and male trade unionists towards women did not greatly differ in both industries and therefore could not be taken as a solid factor in the explanation of such a difference. The fact that male views tended to be similar in both industries raises the problem of knowing whether, qualitatively speaking, the difference in female membership was all that great after all. In order to answer such a question and to qualify the notion of difference, it seems crucial to examine the other side of the story, that is to say the relationship between women and trade unionism, which is the purpose of the present chapter. It will concentrate firstly on women's membership, as well as their distribution in female and mixed unions. It will then examine whether the notions of gender and class played a role in shaping women's pattern of unionisation. Being a member does not necessarily mean being a militant, of course, especially for women since the limits between membership and militancy are often determined by external factors rather than their own will. So, it seems important to consider other factors which could have influenced women's unionisation and the way they perceived trade unionism. Various forms of participation, such as women's actual responsibilities in congresses and unions, as well as the attitude they adopted while holding such responsibilities, will be examined in order to assess and qualify their degree of involvement and militancy. This will subsequently lead to the study of the attitude of women towards feminist ideas and their perception of womanhood in order to assess whether female tobacco workers also differed from female hatters in their conceptualisation of what the role of women in society as a whole should be. Two important factors must be borne in mind in this analysis. Firstly, being a woman does not necessarily mean being a feminist, especially when this term evolves around the idea that women should be regarded as equal in every aspect of life. Secondly, any ideology or principle is the product of its time and, when referring to the period prior to 1914, one must envisage the fact that feminism did not mean the same as it does nowadays.

Women's membership

Legally speaking, although any married woman was dependent upon her husband in accordance with the Civil Code, the 1884 law legalising unions departed from this idea of dependence and clearly stated that she did not need to obtain his permission to join a union:

> *"Les femmes mariées, exerçant une profession ou un métier peuvent, sans autorisation de leur mari, adhérer aux syndicats professionnels et participer à leur administration et à leur direction."*[1]

Since married women did not need their spouse's consent to become a member, their lack of involvement was sometimes presented as a good illustration of their natural passivity and their acceptance of the paternalistic order:

> *"Les femmes sont en général humbles devant le patron, elles n'ont pas décidé encore d'exister socialement autrement que comme la fille de leur père ou l'épouse de leur mari, en dépit de la loi de 1884 qui les autorise expressément à entrer dans un syndicat sans l'autorisation conjugale."*[2]

Yet, it must be stressed that their freedom of choice was limited from the beginning in the sense that married women did need their husband's authorisation to have the right to work. As they could not join a union without being a worker, their membership was still to a certain extent dependent upon husbands' benevolence. The legislation targeted women's right to exercise some influence in the workplace, but it could not exercise any control over what was decided in the home in terms of women's right to work.

Quantitatively speaking, the under-representation of women workers in trade unions between 1900 and 1914 was striking. In 1900, there were 30 975 women in workers' unions out of 492 647 members, that is to say 6.28%, as opposed to 89 364 or 8.70% in 1914 (See appendix 3.1). These figures reveal a progressive increase both in absolute and relative terms. The increase in women's membership was more important than the increase in the total membership: their number almost tripled whereas the total number doubled. Yet, despite this increase, their membership rate remained very low throughout the period, especially when compared to their proportion in the working population: in 1911, for instance, there were only 9.8% of women in workers' unions, while they represented 38.15% of the working population. However, it must be borne in mind that trade unionisation as a whole remained very low throughout the period. When comparing the number of members (See appendix 3.1) with the figures regarding the working population (See appendix 1.1), the following results are

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[1] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Femmes et féminisme dans le mouvement ouvrier français, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1981, p. 62.

[2] Jean Rabaut, Féministes à la Belle Époque, Paris, France Empire, 1985, p. 179.

obtained: only 10.11% of the total working population belonged to a workers' union in 1901, as opposed to 17.91% in 1911. These figures for women were respectively 1.69% and 4.60%. Therefore, despite women's low membership rate, one cannot deny that the increase in their number and proportion in unions was accompanied by an increase in their trade unionisation.

The way women were organised was far from being the same from one industry to another. It was not uncommon to find several unions, whether male, mixed or female, from the same industry coexisting locally. For instance, Madeleine Guilbert mentions the case of the Toulouse shoe industry whose workers were divided into four different unions, including only one mixed[3]. As will be seen later, in this respect, the tobacco and hat industries were no exception. By contrast, some industries did not have any mixed unions at all. Such was the case in the building and book industries. This could reflect two different things: on the one hand, the absence of women in the industry, as was probably the case in the building industry; on the other hand, a strict policy against women in trade unions, as was the case in the book industry.

According to Madeleine Guilbert[4], out of 267 workers' unions in which women could be found in 1900 for instance, 236 were mixed. They were mainly in the textile industry (78), the tobacco industry (33), the clothing industry (21) and the shoe industry (13). Out of the 31 remaining female unions, eight were to be found in the clothing industry, seven in the tobacco industry, four in the textile industry, as opposed to none in the hat or food industry.

Like the number of women in unions, the total number of female unions tended to increase throughout the period. The 31 female unions found in 1900 represented 10% of the total number of workers' unions, and their 4 751 members counted for 15.3% of the total female membership of workers' unions. In 1911, these proportions were respectively 17% (162 unions) and 24.9% (25 207 women). However, this increase was much more noticeable in some industries, such as the textile or clothing industry, than in others, such as the shoe and metal industries.

The above figures and differences give an idea of the lack of unity in the general pattern of unionisation and policy to dictate how women should get organised. They also reveal an evolution in the relationship between men and women: not only did more and more women

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[3] Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, p. 37.
[4] Ibid., p. 39.

join unions, but their tendency to do so in an independent way increased. Yet, this did not necessarily mean that they became more independent themselves, nor that their opposition to male unionists became stronger. This tendency could also reflect the fact that they had to create their own unions because men would not accept them in theirs. In addition, in most cases, the creation of female unions was encouraged and organised by male trade unionists or outsiders[5]. Therefore, it could be said that the gender division of unions was rarely the outcome of women workers' own desires or ambitions.

According to Madeleine Guilbert, women were unlikely to join a union even in the industries where they formed the majority of the workforce. Therefore, the high proportion of women in a given industry did not necessarily mean a high proportion of women in unions[6]. In such a context, women tobacco workers were undoubtedly an exception. According to the *Office du travail*, between 1891 and 1897, the proportion of women in the tobacco workers' federation varied between 90.23% and 89. 27% (See appendix 3.2). The Annuaire des syndicats shows that in 1900, 91.72% of union members were female, while the proportion of women in the workforce reached about 90%. These rates reached respectively 87.73% and about 86% in 1914 (See appendix 3.3). Therefore, the proportion of women in unions corresponded almost exactly to the proportion of women in the workforce. The minimum was found in 1911 with 78.65% of female members and the maximum reached in 1905 with 98.63%. Thus, the rates remained very high throughout the period, especially when compared to the national rates given at the beginning of this section, be they in the federation on its own or in unions in general.

In comparison, hatters' unions were not so exceptional. According to the Annuaire, in 1900 only 2.28% of members were women, as opposed to the peak of 27.84% in 1914[7] (See appendix 3.4). Therefore, as a whole, the proportion of women remained relatively low, especially in relation to their proportion in the workforce[8]. Nonetheless, their rate steadily increased, except in 1911, and remained higher than the national average throughout the period. So, even if women's rate of unionisation in this industry was not exceptional, at least it differed from the norm and revealed a positive evolution in the acceptance of women in unions.

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[5] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, op. cit., p. 209.
[6] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp. 28-37.
[7] These proportions do not include cap makers.
[8] See Chapter 1, pp. 63-64.

These figures remain general and conceal some regional as well as variations by category. For instance, in Paris in 1909, the proportion of women in hatter's unions reached 44.26%, that is to say almost half of the total membership. On the other hand, the number of women in cap makers' unions remained below the national average throughout the whole period: in 1903 cap makers' unions included only 0.54% of women in their ranks, as against 7.42% in 1914[9]. This was probably due to the fact that cap making was an essentially masculine activity, which made the unionisation of women even rarer than usual in this sector.

As observed before, the creation of unions, be they female or mixed, was rarely the outcome of female workers' efforts. Thus, in 1902 the hatters' federation contributed to the creation of the milliners' union in Paris and in July 1906 the *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières chapelières d'Essonnes* was created by the male union of this locality[10]. Yet, a few examples of unions created by women were found in both industries. In 1908, the female hatters of Quillan formed their own union, of which all the males became members. Unfortunately, this union disappeared a year later after an unsuccessful strike[11]. In the tobacco industry, during the 1891 congress of the federation Mme Caron, the leader of the Bordeaux union, explained that four preliminary meetings were organised to form their union but men did not attend them and women had to overcome various difficulties to do the job on their own[12]. During the following congress *Citoyenne* Deleuil, from Marseilles, told the audience how she and *Citoyenne* Jay participated in the creation of the Riom and Orléans unions on their way to the congress in Paris. She took this opportunity to point out the fact that in these two factories women had been much less passive than men, which counterbalances Rabaut's statement mentioned at the beginning of this chapter[13]. Despite difficulties, forming a union was therefore not always a male prerogative.

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[9] Proportions established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

[10] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 10, Fédération de la Chapellerie, *"Affiches et statuts"*.

[11] L'Ouvrier chapelier, July-August 1908, p. 1.

[12] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 25 au 31 décembre 1891, Paris, 1892, p. 36.
It is a shame that these difficulties were not mentioned in detail.

[13] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, Paris, 1893, pp. 199-201.

Now that the actual proportion of women in unions has been definitely established, it seems important to go further in the study of women's unionisation by examining what kind of unions they were more likely to join in the two industries under scrutiny.

In terms of gender, unions could be classified into three categories: mixed, male and female unions. Given that the Annuaire des syndicats started to give the number of women in unions only in 1900 and, therefore, that the term "workers" before this period could be either generic or gendered, the examination of this source made it impossible to determine the exact number of unions belonging to the above three categories throughout the whole period. The calculation was made easier after 1900 in so far as, in most cases, the presence of women was indicated. In this respect, ten different categories were identified according to the unions' names (See appendix 3.5).

About 65% of unions in the tobacco industry were mixed and 22.8% were male between 1900 and 1914. In the hat industry, these proportions were respectively 36.6% and 60% (See appendix 3.6). The fact that the majority of unions were mixed in the tobacco industry and male in the hat industry is not in itself a sign that tobacco workers were necessarily more welcoming to women; such distribution could be explained by the simple fact that women's unionisation in the hat industry was not developed enough yet.

Female unions represented only 12.28% of the total number of unions and 15.9% of unions including women in the tobacco industry. These rates were respectively 2.81% and 7.14% in the hat industry. So, when comparing the number of mixed unions with the number of female unions, it can be seen that in both industries the general tendency was towards a mixed form of unionisation for women.

In order to give more details about the distribution of women in mixed and female unions, it seems important to complement these general figures with the evolution of the proportion of women in mixed unions and that of the proportion of women in mixed unions as opposed to female unions. In the tobacco industry, the number of mixed unions passed from 17 in 1900 to 28 in 1909 and then decreased to 22 in 1914. Yet, this decrease was not necessarily accompanied by a decrease in the number of women in such unions: there were 9 172 of them in 1909 and 10 973 in 1914. Their concentration remained very high with 91.81% in 1900 and 88.23% in 1914. Women tobacco workers were therefore in the majority not only in unions in general but also in mixed unions in particular (See appendices 3.7 and 3.9).

On the contrary, female unions tended to remain more or less the same; with seven in 1900, their number reached its peak with nine in 1905 but then decreased and by 1914 it was at the same level as in 1900. The same could be said about the number of women in such unions, with 2 660 women in 1900 against 2 720 in 1914. The proportion of women belonging to female unions as opposed to mixed unions decreased slightly over the period, passing from 23.79% to 19.86%. Therefore, there was a slightly growing tendency to join mixed unions rather than female unions among women tobacco workers.

In the hat industry, the number of mixed unions increased steadily throughout the period with three in 1900 and 15 in 1914. This increase was also accompanied by an increase in the number of women belonging to such unions; by 1914 there were 1 668 of them, that is to say 45 times as many as in 1900. Yet, the proportion of women in such mixed unions only doubled between 1900 and 1914 (See appendices 3.8 and 3.9).

The number of female unions remained very low, with one in 1901 and two from 1902 onwards. The number of women in these unions decreased drastically, dropping from 212 in 1902 to 89 in 1914, that is to say a 58% decrease. The proportion of women in female unions as opposed to mixed unions also decreased drastically from 1902 onwards, dropping from 56%, that is to say more than half, to only 5% in 1914. In 1902, there were more women in female unions than in mixed unions, but the balance was reversed from 1903 onwards. So, even if originally the gender division seems to have been higher among hatters, it decreased much more rapidly than in the tobacco industry between 1902 and 1914. Therefore, relatively speaking, there was a greater tendency to join mixed unions as opposed to female unions in the hat industry.

Women's attitude to gender and class

After examining the presence of women in quantitative terms and studying the type of unions they were more likely to join, the actual attitude they adopted as members remains to be examined. Considering the fact that neither female tobacco workers nor female hatters followed a pre-determined pattern of organisation, it is expected that women's behaviour would vary according to their own interests, orientations and type of membership. The purpose of this section is therefore to examine these variations in detail from two different angles: firstly, women's relationship with their female and male counterparts and, secondly, the way they dealt with the notion of class division.

In the tobacco industry, although several examples of solidarity between female workers from the same union were found[14], this does not mean however that their relationship was to be always peaceful and harmonious. Thus, in 1899 the president of the Nantes union, Louise Biard, wrote to the committee of the federation to complain about the lack of solidarity among some female workers who went against another worker who had had trouble with one of the supervisors of the factory[15].

The situation in Marseilles offered an interesting example of what the relationship between women from different unions could be in the sense that this factory witnessed the co-existence of two female unions[16]. Both unions started as female and lasted as such till 1914, coexisting with the male union created in 1886. In January 1887, the female workers went on strike to demand the expulsion of one of their supervisors for being too harsh towards workers. Strikers asked for the support of the local *Union des chambres syndicales* which advised them to join a union so that they could have their own delegates to deal with their problems. Talks took place to see if women could join the union which already existed in the factory, but female workers refused to join it, preferring to be in a separate union after the men had proven their lack of interest in their cause during the strike. They therefore created their own union at the end of January 1887. This proud wish to remain separate and independent went even further. Their main concern being the defence of their own interests, and the increase in their pension in particular, members of this union came to refuse to belong to the federation, mainly because they did not want to pay 5c per head as a subscription in order to keep their capital[17] nor to be represented by the same delegate at the Central Committee[18]. As will be seen later, this caused a split between women and the creation of a second female union. The relationship between these two unions was sometimes ambiguous, if not openly hostile. Thus, during the 1897 strike, although nine women from the independent union originally supported the federative union and attended its meetings, *"donnant ainsi une preuve d'union les plus*

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[14] For instance, in December 1899, one could read the following statement in L'Écho des tabacs:

> *"Nous vous disons de ne pas oublier que nous sommes syndiquées et sévères et, par conséquent, solidaires les unes des autres."*

L'Écho des tabacs, December 1899, p. 3.

[15] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1899, p. 2.

[16] The Marseilles factory was the only case where such a situation was found.

[17] Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 609.

[18] Troisième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 4 au 12 juin 1894, Paris, 1894, p. 219.

louables, en présence du conflit"[19], they soon abandoned the cause, and 300 delegates of the independent union eventually went to see the manager to replace the strikers[20].

The Annuaires des syndicats has been useful in providing a list of other female unions co-existing with either male or mixed unions. The Toulouse female union was created when a mixed union was already in existence. It lasted from 1895 to 1900. The Lille union, called "feminine association", also existed in parallel with a mixed union. Created in 1911, this association included from 130 to 150 women and was still in existence in 1914.

The unions in Paris (Le Gros Caillou) and Morlaix appear to have been created as the consequence of a divergence with the mixed union and its orientation too. Yet, this divergence seems to have been more the result of a temporary disagreement rather than a deeply rooted gender struggle: they both had a very short existence in comparison with the mixed unions which remained and eventually gathered all the unionised workers.

The female unions in Lyons, Dijon, Bordeaux and Orléans were all created in the same years as male unions. In the last three cases, it could be argued that the female union was created as the consequence of a bad mixed experience since its creation followed the dissolution of a mixed union. The relationship between male and female unions has been difficult to assess and varied from one factory to another. The one in Lyons ended in February 1905, when its members decided to merge with the male union of this locality[21]. In Bordeaux, both unions worked together when questions of general interest were concerned, whereas examples of actions of women against men in Orléans were mentioned at a meeting of the Central Committee in March 1901[22].

In the hat industry, the first female union was created in 1887 in Aix. Women in Bourg de Péage, Moulins and Paris soon followed, and by 1890, there were six female unions[23]. Created in 1882, the *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières garnisseuses en chapellerie de Chazelles sur Lyon* was apparently the second union of hatters to be formed in Chazelles, after the fullers'

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[19] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1897, p. 2.
[20] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1898, p. 4.
[21] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1905 p. 7.
[22] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1901, p. 1.
[23] For a more detailed history of the federation before 1890, see:
" *"Historique de la Société générale"*, Rapport du huitième congrès national des ouvriers chapeliers de France, tenu à Aix, du 13 au 18 juillet 1892, Paris, Imprimerie J. Allemane, 1892, pp. 135-142.
Jean Vial, La Coutume chapelière, Paris, Domat-Montchrétien, 1941, pp.147-230.
Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 3, Paris, Imprimerie Natrionale, 1901, pp. 474-594.

union. Its membership went from 215 members in 1890 to 235 in 1893, which was approximately the same number as the fullers' union. Its existence was apparently caused by a function division in Chazelles: before its disappearance in 1893-94, three different unions existed in Chazelles, and all three referred to a specific function in the hat industry (fitters and shapers, fullers and women liners). When it disappeared, women joined mixed unions (mixed in term of sex and function).

The case of the female union in Lyons was slightly different. The *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières en coiffe de chapellerie* was formed in March 1889, by women, as the result of a struggle based on function too, but women did not directly join mixed unions after its dissolution. When it disappeared in May 1892, there was no union capable of admitting them because of their function. It is not before 1903 that the first mixed union was created (mixed in term of sex and function)..

Created in 1887, the *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières en chapellerie d'Aix* was, apparently, the result of a gender struggle. When it was created, two male unions already existed, one for any kind of hatters, the other only for fullers. When it disappeared in 1897, women seem to have given up trade unionism, since the remaining two unions never contained any women according to the Annuaire.

The union in Grenoble was the only female union which existed in parallel with no other union during its existence. Yet, it did not last long: from 1895 to 1897. The next union to be created in Grenoble in 1903 was called mixed, but never contained any women, according to the Annuaire.

Following the 1884 congress decision to encourage women to join unions, the main Parisian union decided to launch a campaign among female workers in the capital city. As a result, the *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières en chapellerie* was founded in March 1887, with 80 subscribers. However, it disappeared a few months later, after *"numerous administrative problems"*[24]. Two other female unions were created in Paris, respectively in 1900 and 1901. They were the only female hatters' unions still in existence in France in 1914. Their case is particularly interesting because they both revealed the sex-function divisions prevailing among Parisian hatters. The first one was a union of female hatters making hats mechanically. It existed in parallel with a mixed union of workers specialised in the same function and a mixed federate union which included hatters of any kind. The second female union mixed two

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[24] Ibid., p. 520.
It is a shame that these problems were not listed in detail in the above document.

functions and existed in parallel with the mixed federate union and two other male unions each specialised in one of the two functions. These two unions could be regarded as a good example of a wish for female workers to give priority to their sex and specific function, with no consideration for their class. However, this apparent lack of consideration could hide other factors, such as the inability for men to accept gender differences.

As far as mixed unions were concerned, in the tobacco industry workers seem to have worked either separately or in common. In Paris, where the union was mixed, both women and men had a separate board in charge of discussing matters referring to their own needs and held meetings together for matters of general interest. When a common claim had to be made, a delegation was chosen in both boards[25].

At a federative level, the relationship between men and women seems to have been generally courteous and respectful. This respect even led to admiration and glorification in some cases, as attested by the following statement made by *Député* Rousset at the end of the 1896 Congress:

> *"Dans la fédération des tabacs, les femmes portent la culotte (...) Dans votre syndicat, les femmes ont joué un rôle prépondérant, un rôle caractéristique, elles ne se sont pas opposées à l'action des hommes, elles ont apporté leurs qualités propres dans la discussion avec l'administration, avec les chefs, avec leur patron (...) Elles ont apporté leurs connaissances pratiques de ce qu'est la nécessité de la vie."*[26]

The above statement is worth particular attention because it shows why female tobacco workers were regarded as an exception and worth being admired. Firstly, they were in control and they could perform tasks usually reserved for men. Secondly, they were admirable because they did not oppose men and brought their female qualities in the struggle. All these elements reinforced the idea developed in the previous chapter when referring to what was expected from female militants. In other words, female tobacco workers were regarded as exceptional because they met these expectations.

However, this ideal vision conceals some less glamorous aspects of the relationship between women and men in the federation. Oppositions and tensions were also noticed on various occasions, as illustrated by the following examples. During the 1908 congress, Mallardé

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[25] See:
Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand, Dossier Dos 331 SYN, *"Syndicats et chambres syndicales en France: articles de presse depuis 1874"*.
Marie Bonnevial, *"Le mouvement syndical en France"*, Revue de morale sociale, September 1901, p. 265.

[26] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1896, p. 3.

announced his wish to publish an article accusing women of being greedy and producing too much, to the detriment of the quality of the product, simply because they wanted to get more money out of their work. Several women, including Rico, Vidal and Berthin, and only one man, Gemon, took the side of female workers, claiming that the quality of tobacco, therefore the general management, was responsible for the production of bad products[27]. During the 1911 congress, when the time to discuss the allocation of clothes for women came, some delegates complained that men still had not received complete satisfaction on this matter and stated that priority should be given to them before asking for clothes for women. *Citoyenne* Jacoby then replied in these terms:

> *"Je dis, messieurs, que vous avez eu un commencement de satisfaction, tant mieux, la suite viendra je l'espère, mais c'est à nous maintenant d'avoir des vêtements."*[28]

The use of *nous* in this context is gendered; *nous* as women as opposed to *nous* as workers. Although Jacoby appeared to be glad that men obtained something, she was not ready to sacrifice women in the name of a so-called workers' solidarity.

Although L'Ouvrier chapelier offered fewer examples of the relationship that could exist between men and women in mixed unions in the hat industry, it must be noticed that these examples were mostly examples of good behaviour and solidarity. Whether this corresponded to a political correctness in order to give a positive image of collaboration between genders, and therefore attract more women, is debatable, but as put in the federative paper, their relationship could be summarised in these terms:

> *"Nous avons pu constater la sympathie régnant entre l'élément féminin des diverses catégories de la corporation avec les camarades hommes."*[29]

Other examples described acts of solidarity, be they the male workers of the Marmilliod factory protesting against the sacking of Melle Minars, the delegate of the union, and demanding her re-integration[30], or the strike carried out by all the Lille unions in 1909[31] for the re-employment of a female delegate who had been sacked after striking[32].

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[27] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1908, p. 5.
[28] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 98.
[29] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1July 1904.
[30] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 9, Fédération de la chapellerie, *"Correspondance 1er juillet-31 décembre 1912"*.
[31] See Chapter 4, in particular pp. 200-205, for further detail on the relationship between men and women in strikes.
[32] A. Roux, *"Tournée de propagande"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, January-February 1909, p. 1.

No general rule can be drawn from the above examples as far as the relation between unions in terms of gender was concerned. It could be argued that the notion of gender remained a greater issue among female tobacco workers as time went by, especially when comparing the number of female unions co-existing with male unions and the length of female unions' existence in both industries. However, it must be borne in mind that the choice between a mixed union and a female union was not necessarily based on gender. Various factors could play an important role such as the lack of an existing mixed or female union, the trade or function represented in unions or the political orientation chosen by unions.

In this connection, it seems interesting to examine the class divisions[33] existing amongst tobacco workers and hatters. The Annuaire des syndicats shows several cases of "yellow", or non federate, and "red", or federate, unions co-existing in the same tobacco factory; such was the case in Marseilles, Lyons, Dijon, Nice, Châteauroux, Orléans, Riom, Limoges, Paris, Morlaix and Nantes at some point in the period under scrutiny. The presence of such divisions puts a limit on the solidarity which could exist between tobacco workers, all the more so when considering examples of their chaotic relationship. Thus, during the 1896 federative congress, two women from the Marseilles independent union came to attend the congress, but were rejected[34]. In 1899 in Marseilles, the female workers of the non-federate union were still working 11 hours to increase their production, while the federate workers were doing 10 hours[35]. In 1903, all the yellow unions tried to organise a national congress in Châteauroux, but the federated unions decided to boycott it. An article in L'Écho des tabacs describes how the meeting room was evacuated by the police after some red militants had invaded the room before the meeting and some women had threatened the yellow workers with umbrellas. The cigarette makers refused to return to the factory if the congress was to take place and the latter was eventually cancelled[36]. This last example reveals that women could be very keen on preserving their class interests to the detriment of a form of solidarity based on gender, but it also shows an acute division in terms of class and gender.

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[33] In this context, "class divisions" are to be understood as the divisions which existed between red and yellow unions, or between federate and non-federate unions.
[34] Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 224.
[35] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1899, p. 4.
[36] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1903, p. 3.

It is important to go further in the analysis of the relationship between gender and class divisions to assess whether a co-relation could be made between the presence of women and the presence of a class division. In this connection, the tobacco industry offers a few interesting cases of mixed or female versus federate or non federate unions coexisting in the same factory; in Marseilles between 1892 and 1914, in Lyons between 1903 and 1905, in Nice between 1903 and 1909, in Châteauroux between 1905 and 1914, in Pantin between 1901 and 1905 and, finally, in Le Gros Caillou between 1901 and 1903.

In Marseilles, the female union's refusal to join the federation[37] caused a division in its rank and file and consequently 170 women left to form their own federate union in March 1892. Thus, from 1892 onwards, there were three coexisting unions; one male, the *Syndicat des ouvriers aux tabacs de Marseille*, which belonged to the federation, and two female, the non-federate *Chambre syndicale des ouvrières de la manufacture des tabacs de Marseille* and the federate *Syndicat des ouvrières fédérées de Marseille*. In 1895, there were 60 workers in the first union, 960 in the second one and 230 in the third one. By 1900, there were still 60 workers in the first one, 800 in the second one, and 360 in the third one. The number of women in the yellow union constantly declined, dropping from 800 in 1902 to 200 in 1914, whereas the number of those belonging to the female federate union continued to average 350 women. The average number of unionised women in general dropped from 1 160 in 1900 to 550 in 1914. Alongside the general decrease in the number of women tobacco workers[38], the decrease in the number of women in the yellow union could show that the notions of gender and self interest progressively took a lesser part among women, but this did not benefit to the female federate union since its membership did not increase accordingly. Women in Marseilles remained therefore attached to their independence both in relation to men and in relation to their own interests to the detriment of the class struggle. There is therefore in this case a link to be made between the presence of women and the presence of a class division. Yet, this does not mean that men and women from the federate unions could not collaborate, and cases of solidarity between them were found, such as during the 1901 congress when Mme Lauze, the leader of the female union, strongly supported Bellot, the leader of the male union[39].

The case of Lyons between 1902 and 1905 was different. By 1902, there were three different unions in Lyons: the male federate *Syndicat des ouvriers aux tabacs de Lyon*, the female

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[37] See p. 133.
[38] Between 1890 and 1905, the number of women working in the Marseilles factory passed from 1 162 to 881.
[39] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1901, p. 4.

federate *Syndicat des ouvrières de la manufacture des tabacs de Lyon* and the mixed non-federate *Chambre syndicale indépendante des ouvriers et ouvrières de la manufacture des tabacs de Lyon*. The latter was created in reaction to the federate unions during the 1902 general strike. In 1903, there were 70 workers in the first one, 300 in the second one, and 87 in the third one, including 70 women. Keeping the case of Marseilles in mind, it could be thought that there was a correlation between the dissidence and the high proportion of women in the dissident union. Yet, this dissidence was mainly the result of personal disagreement between two male workers and the leader of the male union. The opposition to the federate unions was not coupled with a gender division, the third union being mixed, and it did not last long since the dissident union disappeared in 1905. This was soon followed by the creation of a mixed union to replace both federate unions. Consequently, from 1905 onwards, there was only one union left in Lyons, in which 320 women out of 395 members were to be found in 1914. So, unlike the case in Marseilles, no real correlation could be made between a class and a gender division in Lyons.

The same could be said about Nice between 1903 and 1909. There were two different mixed unions: the non-federate *Syndicat des ouvriers et ouvrières de la manufacture de Nice* and the federate *Syndicat fédéré des tabacs, section de Nice*. No link could be made between a class and a gender distinction in this case either. In 1903, there were 625 members, including 614 women, in the first union, and 234 members, including 200 women, in the federate union. In 1909, the figures dropped respectively to 368 (354 women) and 168 (32 women). The high proportion of women in both unions shows that the class division did not have anything to do with gender. Once the federate union disappeared, the first one never regained the membership it had before the creation of the federate one.

No such correlation could be established in the case of Châteauroux between 1905 and 1914 either. In 1905, there were two unions in Châteauroux, both mixed: *Syndicat des ouvriers et ouvrières aux tabacs de Châteauroux* and *Syndicat de l'Avenir de la manufacture des tabacs de Châteauroux*. They were composed of respectively 1 098 (1 070 women or 97.44%) and 102 (40 women or 39.21%) members. However, it is worth noticing that in this case the dissident union was dominated by men.

Once again, the class division in Pantin between 1901 and 1905 had nothing to do with gender. By 1901, there were three unions: *Syndicat des ouvriers et ouvrières aux tabacs de Pantin, Syndicat des ouvriers des ateliers de construction mécanique et d'entretien des*

manufactures des tabacs and *Syndicat de l'Égalité des ouvriers de la manufacture des tabacs de Pantin*. The first and third ones were mixed, the second one was mainly composed of men since mechanics were usually men. The federate union gathered 338 workers, including 250 women. The membership reached 750 workers (664 women) in 1914. The other union never went beyond 104 members. It was never a threat to the federate union and disappeared soon after 1905.

The case of Le Gros Caillou between 1901 and 1903 differed in the sense that there was only one mixed federate union co-existing with one female dissident union, the *Syndicat l'Egalité des ouvrières de la manufacture des tabacs du Gros-Caillou*. The mixed union was created before the female union, therefore it could be argued that the dissidence came from a disagreement based on gender as well as class. However, the female union never included more than 104 members, which was nothing compared to the federate union containing from 980 workers (900 women) in 1900 to 870 (716 women) in 1914. Although all the dissidents were women, the majority of women remained attached to the federation. Consequently, it seems that the notion of class prevailed over the notion of gender.

These examples show the divisions which could exist not only between the two genders, but also between women, which gives a new perspective to the argument that women did not get involved either because unions did not meet their needs or because they did not meet unions' needs. Their involvement could also be related to and be determined by the same facts. On the one hand, some women created their own union to react against males who did not respect their needs, but, on the other hand, a handful created a union as a reaction against other women who did not respect trade unionism as a movement. Therefore, women's needs were not necessarily gendered. The fact that no strict correlation between the presence of women and the class division could be made tends to show that women did not play a determining role in the class division amongst tobacco workers.

In the case of the hat industry, although the Annuaire des syndicats does not provide any detailed list of unions belonging to the hatters' federation, two groups of unions were found to be in competition with it. The *Union syndicale des ouvriers en châpeaux de soie de France,* which appeared for the first time in the 1891 Annuaire, included four unions, in Paris, Reims, Essonnes and Argenteuil. The *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie (soie et mécanique),* created in 1902, was composed of five unions between 1902 and 1909, against

six between 1910 and 1914. Despite the fact that women were present in both federate and non-federate unions, the low membership of the latter (226 members in the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie* in 1912 for instance) indicates that no correlation could be made between the presence of women and the class division at a national level.

The same was observed at a local level in Lyons in 1914, Chazelles-sur-Lyon between 1909 and 1914 and Bourg de Péage and Romans between 1890 and 1892. Two mixed unions coexisted in Lyons in 1914: the *Chambre syndicale des travailleurs des deux sexes de la chapellerie et similaires de Lyon* and the independent *Syndicat indépendant des travailleurs des deux sexes de la chapellerie de Lyon et de la banlieue*. The former contained 55 women out of 300 members, as opposed to five women out of 40 for the latter. Two mixed unions also coexisted in Chazelles: the federate *Syndicat fédéral des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie de Chazelles sur Lyon* and the independent *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Chazelles-sur-Lyon et Viricelles*. In 1909, the federate union included 44 women out of 138 members, and the other one 15 women out of 75. In Bourg de Péage and Romans, the mixed federate *Syndicat fédéral des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie de Bourg de Péage et Romans* coexisted with a male union, the *Union des ouvriers chapeliers de Bourg de Péage et Romans*. Although it has been impossible to establish the membership of these two unions according to the Annuaire, it can be said that the fact that the non-federate union was male and the federate union mixed shows that in this case the class division was caused by men. So, as a whole, the above examples show that dissidence was not linked to the presence of women in the hat industry, while the low membership of dissident unions indicates that women tended to give priority to the class struggle when in mixed unions.

Women's militancy

The presence of a variety of female attitudes towards gender and class in both industries has shown that these two notions could not be regarded as fundamental factors either in explaining women's involvement, or lack of it, in unions or determining female pattern of organisation. This would indicate that other factors played a greater role.

In the tobacco industry, it seems that, in some cases, the way in which job recruitment was performed influenced women's perception of trade unionism in so far as it could be seen as going against personal interests. Women would not join unions for fear of putting the

recruitment of a member of their family at risk. Such an attitude caused discontent amongst trade unionists[40]. Furthermore, not belonging to any union at all was sometimes seen as worst than belonging to the wrong union. Thus, in Nancy in 1913, a female non-unionist was violently prevented from attending a union meeting. She did not dare complain, for fear of reprisals[41].

In other cases, women would not attend trade union meetings because they were not compulsory and therefore could be seen as a waste of time. For instance, L'Écho des tabacs mentioned the case of an old worker who would attend the meetings of the mutual aid association but not those of the trade union because, she claimed, the society would charge her 1F if she did not attend, whereas she would not be fined by the union[42]. Those who did not respect the rules imposed by unions could face severe reprisals, like this female worker who was harassed by 400 women demonstrating against her for several days because she refused to limit her production to the figures agreed by the union[43].

Age also seems to have mattered. For instance, in Lyons, the difference in attitude towards unionisation was described in these terms by a male militant:

> *"Les meilleures militantes ne se trouvent que chez la femme ayant dépassé l'âge de 35 ans; à part quelques exceptions, les jeunes ouvrières sont moins attachées à l'organisation."*[44]

Such a difference of behaviour in relation to age could be related to several factors. As suggested in Chapter 1, it could be argued that militancy was linked to tradition and results; older members were used to union practice and workings as well as more aware of what was gained thanks to union activity. Age involved awareness. In addition, the fact that they were likely to be married, to have worked in the factory for years, and would probably carry on doing so for years, made them more likely to wish to improve their working conditions. Yet, this does not mean that age should explain militancy and that young female workers should be excused, all the more so because they were more educated, therefore more able to get involved if they wished to, as expressed in the federative paper:

> *"L'Écho des tabacs n'est que très rarement lu (...) de la part de certaines vieilles camarades, c'est encore excusable, puisque malheureusement elles ne savent pas lire (...) mais de la part des jeunes qui, pour la grande majorité,*

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[40] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1897, p. 4.
[41] AN F7 13 817, "Tabacs, 1913".
[42] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1912, p. 3
[43] AN 13 817, "Tabacs, 1913".
[44] Marie-Louise Compain, La Femme dans les organisations ouvrières, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1910, p. 67.

ont acquis une bonne instruction primaire (...) vous n'avez pas le droit de vous en désintéresser."[45]

The fact that the reading of L'Écho des tabacs was a sign of militancy reflects once again a male vision of such militancy. Women were expected to read the federative paper to prove their involvement without considering that they rarely had time to read, if they knew how to read at all.

In the hat industry, many aspects of women's attitudes also confirm the suggestions made at the end of Chapter 1. First of all, their few numbers in unions did not encourage others to join because of a lack of either confidence or initiative, as expressed in the two following statements:

"Les femmes viendraient bien, mais la majorité d'entre elles font partie des société patronales. Pour cela la minorité n'ose pas venir."[46]
"Nous croyons même savoir le motif (...), ce qui vous manque, c'est l'initiative. C'est vous donner une base qu'il vous faudrait (...); ce serait de vous présenter quelques règlements de syndicats de femmes existant déjà."[47]

Militancy was also dependent upon factors which were most relevant for women, such as pressure from employers, time constraints or family responsibilities. For instance, in 1909, Roux, one of the leaders of the federation, organised a meeting with a view to create a union in Ribemont (Aisne). He could not help noticing that the workers were put under extreme pressure, but deplored the fact that no women attended the meeting and dared to tell him why[48]. In 1910, Laure Baumgarten, from the Paris union, was accused of being late in the payment of her subscriptions. Her excuse was quite clear, claiming that she intended to come to the union on a Sunday morning but was too busy to do so[49]. Several other examples of absence from meetings or interviews due to lack of time or a family member's sickness were found[50].

This is why the female militant was often presented as a hero, a sacred character, a symbol of abnegation. She had to face much more pressure than her male counterpart, which in turn implied much more courage, therefore deserved much more admiration and gratitude. The

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[45] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1912, p. 3
[46] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Treizième congrès national, tenu du 16 au 21 juillet 1906 à Chazelles-sur-Lyon, Paris, Maison des Fédérations, p. 14.
[47] Mme Espanet, *"A nos camarades d'Essonnes"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 July 1906, p. 2.
[48] A. Roux, *"Tournée de propagande"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, January-February 1909, p. 1.
[49] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 9, Fédération de la chapellerie, *"Correspondance 1910, Lettre du 11 décembre 1910 de Laure Baumgarten de Paris"*.
[50] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 9, Fédération de la chapellerie.

necrology sections in L'Ouvrier chapelier are full of examples of this kind of female figures, like Léonie Le Grand from Paris;

> *"Celle qui vient de nous quitter (...) sut toute sa vie, non seulement faire son devoir, mais encore entraîner nombre d'hésitants. Lors de la grève de 1903, les patrons la baptisèrent Louise Michel. Ce surnom lui resta. Notre vaillante camarade fut maintes fois victime de ses convictions et de son action, mais ses camarades lui conservèrent toujours leur affection et leur reconnaissance."*[51]

These examples would suggest that union activities were not necessarily compatible with women's lives, but it has to be borne in mind that they did not necessarily correspond to women's needs or image either. For instance, the place where unions and meetings were located could play a great role in attracting or deterring women. At a time when they were most commonly confined to the private sphere, public, busy places where unlikely to be places where they would feel at ease to express themselves, especially when personal matters were involved. Thus, Melle Guillaume, a female hatter from Paris, used the following excuse to explain to the leader of the local union why she failed to pay her subscription:

> *"Comme il y a toujours du monde à votre bureau, je n'oserais jamais raconter ma misère devant personne."*[52]

This is probably why trade union centres had for some a particularly bad connotation, as if a respectful woman could not be seen there. This was particularly relevant for milliners. In February 1914 a meeting was organised by the milliners' union in order to organise a programme of action related to period of unemployment, overwork and wages. Le Journal commented on this meeting in these terms:

> *"Il faut croire que la situation n'est pas si grave, car c'est à peine si 50 modistes de situation modeste se risquèrent dans les couloirs de la Bourse du travail (...) des militants constatèrent surtout les nombreuses défections et le peu d'entrain des midinettes. Les modistes avons-nous dit n'iront jamais à un syndicat dont le siège est à la Bourse du travail. Le nom, en effet pour les femmes est un épouvantail."*[53]

The fact that only milliners from modest origin were present at this meeting indicates that all the milliners did not necessarily thought to be part of the same category of workers and that it was not necessarily in the best interest of some of them to join unions or feel part of the labour movement. According to the male militant Georges Renard, milliners tended to remain outside the movement mainly because most of them came from bourgeois families and were comparatively well paid[54]. Chapter 1 has shown that there were great variations in wages

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[51] L'Ouvrier chapelier, November-December 1911, p. 4.
[52] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 9, Fédération de la chapellerie, *"Correspondance 1910, Lettre de Melle Guillaume, Paris, 7 octobre 1910"*.
[53] AN F7 13 741, *"Les modistes à la Bourse du travail"*, Le Journal, 20 February 1914.
[54] Georges Renard, *"Les femmes et le syndicat"*, La Grande Revue, 24-25 December 1910, p. 752.

among them, depending on the task they had to perform. Designers earned relatively high wages, especially when compared to the majority of finishers and garnishers. So, although Georges Renard's explanation may not have been completely true, it could be argued that designers formed some kind of trade aristocracy not necessarily willing to mix with other workers whom they might have regarded as from lower grade.

In some cases, women even felt victims of unions, like Adrienne Sackmann from Nancy, who wrote to the federation to ask for help while her mother was ill and her father was working in Paris:

> *"Si je vous fait cette demande, c'est que depuis notre plus jeune enfance, nous sommes les victimes du syndicat qui nous a privé de la présence de notre père parmi nous pendant de longues années."*[55]

This reflects of course a misunderstanding of the role of unions as representatives and defenders of workers' interests as a whole to the detriment of personal, individualistic interests. Yet, it could be argued that it also reflects the pressure trade union activities could indirectly put on women in particular, and the hidden support women could offer to men. Mme Sackmann was indeed left on her own with the children while her husband was working and militating in Paris, therefore, in return, her daughter would expect the union to take her family's sacrifice into account.

The above examples have demonstrated that the grass roots were not always understanding of workers' interests as a whole and that being a member did not necessarily mean being an active militant, at least according to pre-determined male values if not in general. Yet, militancy also depends on structures and actual responsibilities given to women, militancy being also a matter of opportunity. So it is interesting to examine whether unions permitted the expression of women's militancy or somehow precluded it through the use of segregationist habits. Examining the proportion of women on union boards is one good way of assessing such habits by showing the extent to which organisation and responsibilities are dependent upon the idea of gendered spheres. In this connection, even the tobacco industry was no exception. Women were given responsibilities, but not to the same extent as men, especially when relating these responsibilities to the proportion of women in unions.

The first comment which can be made is that women were under-represented on union boards. Of course, female unions were led by women. Thus in 1908, Mme Sarzier was head of the

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[55] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 9, Fédération de la chapellerie, *" Correspondance 1er janvier-30 juin 1912, lettre d'Adrienne Sackmann, de Nancy, 16 février 1912, au syndicat de Paris".*

female union of Issy les Moulineaux, Jacoby, deputy head[56]. In some cases, mixed unions would be led by a woman, but this was not always done without any trouble. For instance, in 1897 the female president of the Tonneins union, Mme Billard, was accused of accepting the new regulations of the factory in the name of the union without consulting its members, and consequently resigned. The majority of the female members then asked her to be replaced by a man, claiming that a man would bring *"plus de fermeté à la marche du syndicat"*. As a result, no women were elected on the new union board[57]. Yet, this state of affairs did not last long since in October 1900, L'Écho des tabacs indicated that the male president had been replaced by Mme Rigal and that, out of 11 members on the board, five were female[58].

Nonetheless, in mixed unions, the majority of union leaders and board members were male throughout the period. According to a document kept at the National Archives in Paris, in 1901, out of 29 workers' unions, and out of 107 members of unions boards, 40 were female, that is to say 37.38%. When taking into account only the mixed unions, we are left with 16 unions and 67 members including 14 women, that is to say 20.89%. Out of these 16 mixed unions, six did not have any women on their board, seven had a woman as deputy head and only three had a female head[59].

Even when women were on the board, most of the time they had secondary roles. For instance, in 1896 in Riom out of eight members, five were women but they all shared secondary functions: two of them were vice-president, one secretary, one treasurer and one deputy-treasurer[60]. In 1900 in Nice, out of seven members on the board, three were women, but they were vice-president, secretary and treasurer[61].

Unsurprisingly, considering the proportion of women in unions, the situation was even worse in the hat industry. For instance, at some point the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Quillan et environs* included five members on its board but not a single woman[62]. The same could be said about the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Belfort* in 1906[63]. This under-representation

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[56] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1908, p. 4.
[57] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1897, p. 3.
[58] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1900, pp. 3-4.
[59] AN F7 13 817, Dossier tabacs 1901, *"Syndicats"*.
[60] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1896, p. 4.
[61] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1900, p. 1.
[62] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 10, Fédération de la Chapellerie, *"Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Quillan et environs"*, Statuts du syndicat, p. 15.
[63] Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale, Carton 10, Fédération de la Chapellerie, *"Union syndicale des ouvriers et ouvrières en chapellerie et parties similaires de Belfort"*, Statuts 1906, p. 18

was to be linked to their under-representation in unions, but in one case, it was described as a price women had to pay for not being more involved. In 1892, the Moulins female union agreed to merge with the male union. Women kept their original subscription, but the new union did not give them any administrative duties, not because they were not trusted as such, but rather because of their low numbers *"car c'est tout au plus si une vingtaine sont syndiquées, réparties dans trois maisons et ce, sur une soixantaine de garnisseuses pour le moins"*[64]. This argument was based on representativeness. Its corollary meant that if women had been more numerous, some of them would -or might- have been chosen as representatives on the board. Yet, it also implied that women were to represent women rather than any union member.

The same segregationist pattern could be observed at a federative level. No female hatters ever belonged to the committee of the hatters' federation before 1914, and even the committee of the tobacco workers' federation remained male dominated despite some noticeable progress. According to the 1892 statutes of the federation, every union was to be represented at the Central Committee by a male delegate chosen from the militants of the three Parisian factories[65]. Consequently, no women were elected in the Central Committee, and therefore none were to be found on the board[66]. During the 1894 congress, there was a discussion about the choice of the delegate for the Dijon section; this union would accept a woman, but this would create problems in the sense that *"ces dames n'ont pas comme les hommes, la facilité de se déplacer jusqu'à minuit ou une heure du matin après leur journée finie pour assister aux séances du Comité"*[67]. However, the general secretary, aware of the difficulty the committee met in recruiting the committee delegates, proposed to allow women to become delegates and to change the statutes accordingly. His proposal was accepted and Mme Neuville, Mme Fraxe and Mme Reischenshamer were selected. Mme Fraxe was nominated as the delegate of the Dijon section, thus becoming the first female member on the committee out of 21[68]. By the 1896 congress, there were already four women on the Committee out of 20 members[69]. This created some tension from time to time; for instance, the Pantin section made

[64] Rapport du huitième congrès national des ouvriers chapeliers de France, op. cit., p. 13.
[65] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 215.
[66] Ibid., pp. 208-209.
[67] Troisième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 38.
[68] Ibid., p. 162.
[69] Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 224.

it clear that they would not accept any woman whose husband was already on the Committee, as was the case for Mme Fraxe. Yet, the vote in favour of women was kept[70]. Seven women were to be found on the committee out of 18 members in 1899: Mme Fraxe (Dijon), Mme Bonnifart (Le Havre), Mme Filieuse (Lyons), Mme Sarzier (Marseilles), Mme Chaillou (Orléans), Mme Alpeter (Reuilly) and Mme Jacoby (Riom)[71]. By 1914, the committee included 10 women out of 22 members[72], that is to say almost 50% but, according to L'Écho des tabacs, it is not until 1913 that Jacoby was elected deputy secretary of the Central Committee, thus being the first woman on the board of the committee[73].

Congresses, be they general or federative, are another good way of assessing segregationist patterns in terms of organisation and responsibilities. The following section will concentrate on, firstly, National workers' and CGT congresses and, secondly, federative congresses. Generally speaking, the number of women at national workers' and CGT congresses remained low throughout the period. Out of 17 reports, there were women delegates in only 11 of them. It is noteworthy that before 1900, only four out of nine included women delegates. After this date, all the congresses included at least one female delegate, the peak being in 1901 with 18 women delegates. According to Madeleine Guilbert, this low participation rate could be explained by the fact that this kind of congress related to general union policy, and that, the number of mandates per union being limited and the average number of women in unions being much lower than that of men, unions tended to send men instead of women. She also takes into account the length of these congresses; it was thought to be easier for men to be absent from work and home for a week than for women, women being generally in charge of families and housework. This idea is reinforced by the fact that the majority of the women who were present at these congresses came from the place where they were held. The congress reports also show that women rarely represented mixed unions. Out of 46 named female delegates, the unions which they represented is specified for 40 of them. Out of this 40, at least 32 delegates represented a female union[74].

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[70] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1896, p. 3.
[71] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1898, p. 2.
[72] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1914, p. 8.
[73] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1913, p. 1.
[74] For further information, see: Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp. 197-201.

The question is whether female tobacco workers and hatters played a significant role in these congresses. As a whole, women tobacco workers were relatively well represented if compared to the representation of women from other branches of industry. Out of 46 named female delegates, six belonged to this federation, the peak year being 1892 when all the five female delegates named came from the tobacco industry. Yet, it is worth mentioning that these five came from Marseilles, which shows, once again, the correlation between the presence of women, their place of work and the place where the congress was held. Furthermore, this comparatively high representation must not be over-estimated; women tobacco workers were present at only two congresses out of 16, in 1892 and in 1902.

The participation of female hatters at these congresses was not even rare, it was simply non-existent. Out of 41 delegates of hatters' unions, none of them were ever women. There might have been an evolution towards women within the federation itself, but it was not noticeable at a confederate level. Like tobacco workers, the representation of hatters nation-wide remained masculine throughout the period.

In general, the most common responsibility or role women were given in sessions (when they were given any), was that of assistants. Apart from the 1902 congress, every time there were female delegates, they were chosen as assistants. Women tobacco workers were no exception to this rule. Thus, in 1892, each of the five women delegates were given at least once each the role of assistants at a session. Marie Deleuil for instance, assisted the president at the second session[75].

Women were sometimes chosen as part of a commission: one (out of five women present at the congress) in 1892, two (out of at least three) in 1900, five (out of 18) in 1901, one (out of two) in 1902, one (out of three) in 1910. The tobacco worker Mme Deleuil belonged to the commission dealing with the national and international organisation of federations in 1892[76], and in 1902, Mme Jacoby belonged to the commission responsible for establishing a project on workers' unity[77].

In addition, women seldom chaired a session at national congresses. The only two who were ever given the effective chair were both tobacco workers: Mme Deleuil in 1892[78], and Mme

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[75] Cinquième congrès national des syndicats et groupes corporatifs ouvriers de France, tenu à Marseille du 19 au 22 octobre 1892, Paris, Marcel Rivière, 1909, p. 14.
[76] Ibid., p. 39.
[77] Treizième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Montpellier, les 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 et 27 septembre 1902. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, Montpellier, Imprimerie Delord- Boehm et Martial, 1902, p. 137.
[78] Cinquième congrès national des syndicats et groupes corporatifs ouvriers de France, op. cit., p. 39.

Jacoby in 1902[79]. In any case, their chair was given as a privilege, a good deed, not as something natural. Thus the former was given the chair after a man had suggested it, and the latter felt obliged to thank the assembly for this honour in these terms:

> *"Je remercie très sincèrement le congrès de la faveur qu'il m'a fait en m'accordant la présidence (...) Je regrette d'être la seule femme présente à ce congrès et je souhaite qu'à l'avenir un plus grand nombre y figure. Puisque les syndicats nous ont admises dans leur sein pour réclamer les revendications de la classe féminine et soutenir cette lutte pour la vie, je compte qu'à l'avenir nous serons parmi vous plus nombreuses."*[80]

Citoyenne Jacoby had to be grateful in front of this audience of men. Yet, she insisted on putting forward the fact that she was a woman and, being the only one present, she had to represent all female workers, using once again the gendered *nous*. Her wish for women to struggle alongside men was evident, but this does not mean that women were to be treated like men, they constituted a particular *class* within the working class, with a specific status and specific claims according to their gender.

As already mentioned, women did not appear to be generally attracted by general union policy and this idea was reflected in the contents of their interventions in national congresses. They were mainly concerned with questions related to their inferior situation in terms of wages, the absence of women on conciliation boards, the rate of their industrial injury benefits and other practical issues. Theoretical issues, such as the organisation of the CGT, its political position and its attitude to the government or the principle of the general strike, were not their main concerns[81]. However, women tobacco workers occasionally showed some interest in these issues, as shown in the 1892 congress when Marie Jay, during the discussion on the 1st May demonstration, wished workers and unions to remain free to demonstrate[82]. Furthermore, Victorine Aubert and Marie Jay took part in the debate on the national and international organisation of federations. They gave priority to the organisation on a national basis which reflected the trend of their federation: because in France tobacco workers were state workers, they wished to remain free to organise independently[83].

In general, women also seldom got involved in debates related to their right to work: only two exceptions could be mentioned, in 1892 and in 1900. Thus, in 1892, Marie Jay made the following declaration:

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[79] Treizième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Montpellier, op. cit, p. 19.
[80] Ibid.
[81] See in particular: Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp. 185-201.
[82] Cinquième congrès national des syndicats et groupes corporatifs ouvriers de France, op. cit,. 71.
[83] Ibid., p. 34.

> *"La femme, quelles que soient ses attributions, ne doit pas être considérée comme un esclave, ni une domestique (...) Il faut que, par son travail, elle puisse avoir son indépendance et se mettre sur le même terrain d'égalité que l'homme."*[84]

She was supported by Victorine Aubert who argued with a delegate who was asking for the complete suppression of work for women in industry and commerce. She wished women to be given work according to their abilities so that they could gain their independence, and defended women who had no one to support them and had to work to meet their needs[85]. Women tobacco workers showed further interest in the question related to the conditions of women in industry. For instance, in 1892 again, Marie Bourgeuil proposed for women not to go to work three weeks before and three weeks after giving birth[86]. It is also interesting to notice that the three men delegates present at this congress never got involved in the discussions when the latter referred strictly to women. One may wonder to what extent this corresponded to a wish to let women express their opinions when they were directly concerned with the question. The same could be said about the 1894, 1898, 1900 and 1910 congresses in so far as no women delegates were present and the men delegates did not get involved in the debates when the "woman question" was either put on the agenda or mentioned. This could be interpreted as a sign that in the tobacco industry, unlike what was widespread in the CGT for instance, decisions taken about women were taken by women in consideration of their actual needs, or that women were not regarded as a so-called problem at all. This interpretation is supported by the fact that women got actively involved in debates related to female issues at a federative level, as will be shown later.

In federative congresses, the presence of women remained generally very low throughout the period too, with the exception of the tobacco industry. Yet, as observed by Madeleine Guilbert, the proportion of women amongst the tobacco workers' delegates was far from reaching the same level as their proportion in unions and the federation[87]. For instance, in 1891 there were 13 female delegates out of 26 delegates, that is to say 50%, whereas the proportion of women in the federation was 90.23% and that of women in the industry about 91% (see appendix 3.10).

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[84] Ibid., pp. 49-50.
[85] Ibid., p. 50.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 185.

The way delegation was spread is another interesting element showing female tobacco workers' under-representation in relation to their number in the federation. For instance, the 1897 congress was composed of 35 members, including 15 women. When a factory was represented by two delegates or more, only one woman was chosen, except in the case of Le Gros Caillou which was represented by three women out of four delegates. When a factory sent only one delegate, the latter was a man, except in the case of Orléans and Pantin[88]. In 1898, only three unions were represented by women; Dieppe, Le Gros Caillou and Pantin[89]. It must be added that no evidence of women complaining about this state of affairs was found.

Under-representation was also a characteristic in the hat industry; only four out of nine congresses included women delegates between 1889 and 1912, and their proportion never went beyond 13.6% (See appendix 3.11). In 1892 the three female delegates were all from the Aix female union. It must be noticed that the congress was actually held in Aix. Three years later, the same union was represented by only two women, and in 1898, it came to be represented by a man. The female union of Essonnes was also represented by a man in 1909. The woman present at the 1912 congress was Mme Ségal, from the Paris milliners' union, which was mainly composed of women. Therefore, it can be said that the few women who did attend represented female unions anyway.

During the 1903 congress, when discussing the representation of unions at congresses, the Lyons delegate proposed that every union of 50 members or more should be represented by one person. In unions including both male and female workers, the delegate should be designated in common. In unions where the number of women exceeded 100, they would be entitled to get their own female delegate who would be chosen in common. This shows discrimination in many ways, at least in the sense that finding more than 50 women in a female union or more than 100 in the same mixed union was unlikely to happen, considering their general membership rate and the average size of unions. Men could be represented with 50 members, women with 100. Once again, the idea that women were to represent their own gender instead of any union member is clear. As was the case in the tobacco industry, no evidence suggested that women called into question this under-representation and this kind of unfair treatment.

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[88] Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 224.
[89] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1898, p. 2.

In terms of roles and responsibilities given to women in federative congresses, at the 1891 tobacco workers' congress, Ducros suggested that every session from now on should be chaired by a man and assisted by a woman[90]. Every session of the 1892 congress included at least one woman out of two assistants. During the same congress, the delegate Mansuy reminded the audience that the chair was usually given to men and the role of assistants to women. Estienne objected that women could also chair sessions. It was finally decided that, when a union was represented by several delegates, men should give their turn to women[91]. The 1894 congress eventually decided that assistants would be chosen only among female delegates, in turn, a woman per factory[92]. As a whole, throughout the period, the common practice remained for men to chair sessions and for women to assist them, but many exceptions were found regarding the chair: *Citoyenne* Caron chaired a session in 1891[93], Mme Vidal in 1896[94] and Mme Barlet in 1913[95]. In comparison, no chair was ever given to a woman in hatters' congresses, but a woman was chosen as an assistant for every session in the 1892 congress.

In terms of participation in discussions, the contrast is flagrant between female tobacco workers and hatters. The active involvement of the former make the silence of the latter even greater. On the one hand, the great number of female tobacco workers' interventions would make it impossible to study them individually, but as a whole, it can be said that they got involved in any kind of discussion, from questions related to unionisation to matters related to wages, crèches, strikes and working hours. Some specific, meaningful interventions have already been examined in qualitative terms and others will be commented on throughout this study.

On the other hand, female hatters' interventions remained rare and discrete, thus following what Madeleine Guilbert said about the general attitude of women in federative congresses[96]. In 1912, Mme Ségal was chosen to give a speech during the public meeting which was to be

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[90] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 6.
[91] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 21.
[92] Troisième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 18.
[93] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 10.
[94] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1896, p. 2.
[95] *"Le congrès de la fédération des tabacs"*, L'Humanité, 25 June 1913, p. 6.
[96] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

held in Bort during the congress. She asked for the federation to develop propaganda among milliners, another way of asking for male assistance in the unionisation of women, hence recognising and admitting that women's education was dependent on men. She also voted against the adoption of the *semaine anglaise*, claiming that milliners could not accept it because they often had to work extra hours to earn enough to live. It is also for this reason that she voted in favour of the subscription being paid only by members who earned more than 10F a week, which reveals that milliners were more interested in practical questions than in principles.

It has been established that, although female tobacco workers were much more present on the federative scene in quantitative as well as qualitative terms, women were generally under-represented in both federations, either in relation to their number in their respective federations and unions, or their number in their respective industry. In other words, none of the two federations represented them fairly and equally in comparison with men, as if the latter did not trust them to take responsibilities on a national basis.

Another interesting way of assessing women's participation at the top of the federative hierarchy is to examine the extent to which women represented their federation. This can be done by studying their role in committees, delegations, meetings, conferences and federative papers.

Women's membership in federative committees has already been examined. Yet, it must be borne in mind that being part of a committee does not necessarily mean being an active participant. One way of assessing the actual involvement of female tobacco workers in these committees is to examine their responsibilities in meetings. In this connection, it was common practice for women to chair these meetings; to mention only a few examples, *citoyenne* Fraxe did it in November 1895[97] and February 1896[98], Mme Sarzier in July 1901[99], Mme Alpeter in August 1901[100], Mme Jacoby in February 1903[101], Mme Thienard in March 1907[102], Mme Ortel in August 1910[103], Mme Blanchard in February 1911[104] and Mme Filieuse in January 1912[105].

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[97] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1895, p. 1.
[98] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1896, p. 1.
[99] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1901, p. 1.
[100] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1901, p. 2.
[101] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1903, p. 1.
[102] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1907, p. 3.
[103] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1910, p. 5.
[104] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1911, p. 2.
[105] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1912, p. 3.

These examples tend to show that women could be active participants when given the opportunity even in a environment dominated by men and following a traditionally masculine form of power. This probably contributed to make the board of the committee eventually accessible to women.

In the tobacco industry, delegations could take different forms. First of all, as already mentioned, delegations could be sent to the management or to officials. Thus, at the 1891 congress *citoyennes* Caron and Bernier were chosen to be members of a delegation of seven people sent to the general manager to obtain the official acknowledgement of unions[106]. Six women out of 22 delegates were sent to the management in 1894[107]. During the 1902 congress, Mme Caron and Mme Jacoby were part of a delegation of six people sent to the *Ministre des finances*[108]. Three women out of six members were sent to the *Chambre* in 1906[109] and six out of 13 in 1907[110]. When considering the number of women sent compared to that of men, it would appear that women were generally under-represented in these delegations too. It is probably for this reason that in April 1896 Mme Fraxe, from the Central Committee, asked that every delegation include at least one woman[111]. Yet, no general rule can be drawn in the sense that examples of delegations including only women or a majority of them were also found, like the delegation of four women out of four delegates sent during the 1892 congress[112] or that of five out of seven in July 1908[113].

Women were also to be found in delegations sent to represent the federation amongst other workers or to represent tobacco workers' trades. Thus, Mme Sarzier was chosen as the delegate at the Bourse du travail in July 1901[114] and, in 1906, Mme Jaffray and Mme Sarzier were chosen to represent the federation at the CGT[115]. Eugénie Marchand from Lille was chosen as a delegate at the 1900 Great Exhibition. This last example showed an evolution in the sense that in the previous exhibition only men were sent. In this connection, in January

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[106] Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 7.

[107] Troisième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 62.

[108] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1902, p. 3.

[109] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1906, p. 2.

[110] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1907, p. 6

[111] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1896, p. 3.

[112] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 107.

[113] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1908, p. 3.

[114] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1901, p. 1.

[115] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1907, p. 6.

1898, *citoyenne* Vincent wrote a letter to the committee complaining about it and asking that women be represented in the delegation sent to the next exhibition[116]. One may wonder to what extent such a letter influenced the decision made to send Eugénie Marchand.

As expected considering their number and representation in federative congresses, female hatters were rarely part of delegations. In fact, the only example found was in 1905, when Melle Jeanne Saintée and Joseph Espanet were sent to the Liege international exhibition to represent the hat industry[117].

It is undoubtedly for the same reason that more examples of women leading meetings and conferences were found in the tobacco industry. Tobacco workers made a good use of female members to represent the federation in this way. They were not only to give their contribution in order to spread their enthusiasm and encourage more women to join[118], but also, in some cases, to give talks on women in particular and on their role in society. In this connection, *citoyenne* Jacoby was a very good illustration, as will be seen later in this chapter.

By contrast, only two examples of a woman leading conferences was found in the case of the hat industry: in 1906, Mme Espanet was asked by the Essonnes union to come, accompanied by a federative delegate, and organise a meeting in this locality[119], whereas in 1912, Mme Ségal took part in a series of conferences organised by the federation to encourage female milliners and cap makers to join unions[120]. Although the practice was far less spread amongst hatters, these last examples show however that they were not all reluctant to trust women and that female hatters could actually use their influence when they were given the opportunity to do so.

The role played by women in federative papers can be another good way of assessing women's involvement in trade union matters. A distinction must be made however between their participation in the writing and in the running of the papers. In terms of regulation, nothing in principle prevented them from writing and sending an article to be published, provided that they could write. Yet, in practice, the analysis of both papers has revealed an extreme

[116] Citoyenne Vincent also published an article in La Fronde on the same topic:
L'Écho des tabacs, January 1898, p. 3
[117] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 November 1905.
[118] See, for instance, the report of Mme Ortel's conference in Le Havre on 1 May 1912: L'Écho des tabacs, June 1912, p. 6.
[119] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 August 1906.
[120] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, Quinzième congrès national, tenu à Bort, du 22 au 27 juillet 1912, Paris, Imprimerie La Productrice, 1913, p. 115.

discrepancy between female tobacco workers and hatters. Interventions from women in L'Écho des tabacs were so numerous that it would be impractical to number them. They were as varied as, and similar to, female interventions in the tobacco workers' federative congresses, whereas women's interventions in L'Ouvrier chapelier were so few that it becomes indispensable to mention their number to fully comprehend the difference[121]: 19 articles or reports signed by women has been counted in the paper between 1890 and 1914. Among these, two were actually written by a militant from Austria[122], two by Maria Vérone[123] and an appeal by a woman belonging to a feminist group and clearly not working in the industry[124]. Therefore, only 14 articles were actually written by women belonging to the hat industry in France. The first to be published had nothing to do with trade unionism: written in 1896 by Marguerite Leblanc, it was entitled *"La mode: les grands chapeaux"* and simply described fashionable hats for women, which made a strong contrast with the rest of the issue in which it appeared[125] and suggested that women were too frivolous to write anything outside articles on fashion. It is not until 1912 that articles written by women to encourage other women to join unions were found on a regular basis. They mainly addressed milliners, as the consequence of the creation of the milliners' union in Paris. So, in terms of active contribution in their federative paper, it cannot be said that female hatters made a great impact and contributed to give an image of women which would escape from the norm. Their lack of contribution could either reveal their lack of interest in union activity or the fact that this kind of contribution did not correspond to a means of expression they would favour or be used to. Yet, whatever the answer to this question, their attitude made a great difference to female tobacco workers' which would confirm that women's attitudes depended on factors not necessarily related to the fact that they were women but to the fact that they evolved in environments which pre-determined their attitudes. It is not the gender which changed but the behaviour related to the environment.

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[121] This number is to be regarded as a minimum in so far as some articles were not signed or signed only with initials. It must be envisaged that some of these articles were actually written by women. The same applies to articles in L'Écho des tabacs.

[122] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 11 October 1891, p. 3.
L'Ouvrier chapelier, 20 May 1894, p. 2.

[123] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 4 April 1897, pp. 3-4.
L'Ouvrier chapelier, 6 February 1898, p. 2.
Maria Vérone was the first woman to become a court lawyer in 1908. In 1913-4, she also got actively involved in the Couriau Affair as the general secretary of the feminist *Ligue des droits des femmes.*

[124] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 October 1902, p. 3.

[125] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 14 June 1896, p. 2.

The same could be said when referring to the running and elaboration of the papers. In the tobacco industry, Mme Fraxe became a member of the commission of L'Écho des tabacs out of eight people in September 1895, that is to say at the same time as the paper was created[126]. A woman was first elected as a member of its editorial committee during the 1913 congress[127], whereas no woman ever appeared on the list of the equivalent committee of L'Ouvrier chapelier during the period under scrutiny. No responsibility was ever given to female hatters in that respect. This does not necessarily mean that they did not want to get involved and that they were more passive than tobacco workers, for they had to be given the responsibility first. So, this absence would suggest that they were not entrusted to perform such a task, which in turn would not give them confidence in attempting actually to perform at this level of involvement.

The above examples of commitment and militancy have revealed an imbalance between tobacco workers and hatters. This imbalance appears even stronger when examining particular cases of militancy. On the one hand L'Ouvrier chapelier and the hatters congress reports are spread with anonymous women or female names which are to be found once or twice in a decade. It would be impossible to make even a short account of Mme Ségal's life as a trade unionist through the reading of these sources. On the contrary, the same names appear numerously and recurrently in tobacco workers' federative sources, which would suggest that more tobacco workers were actual militants or were at least recognised as such. It would not be fair to say that Azélie Jacoby was the only female militant worth some special attention. One cannot forget the involvement of others such as Victorine Aubert[128], Marie Bourgeuil[129], Marie Deleuil[130], Marie Jay[131] and the others who have been mentioned in this chapter. Yet, she represents the epitome of militancy in the tobacco workers' federation before 1914 in the sense that she was the only one to accumulate all the responsibilities ever given to a woman in the

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[126] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1895, p. 1.

[127] This committee, created in 1910, was responsible for publishing feature articles of general interest. Originally, it did not include any women out of 7 members. See:
L'Écho des tabacs, June 1910, p. 12.
L'Écho des tabacs, March 1914, p.1.

[128] Jean Maitron and Claude Pelletier (ed.), Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, Vol. 10, Paris, Editions Ouvrières, 1964, p. 163.

[129] Jean Maitron and Claude Pelletier (ed.), Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, op. cit., Vol. 11, p. 24.

[130] Jean Maitron and Claude Pelletier (ed.), Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, op. cit., p. 349.

[131] Jean Maitron and Claude Pelletier (ed.), Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, op. cit., Vol. 13, p. 105.

federation at the time and, as such, she is worth particular attention in the context of this study.

Jacoby worked at Le Gros Caillou and became a member of the Paris union as soon as it was founded in 1890. She soon became the secretary of the union and retained this post when the factory was transferred to Issy les Moulineaux in the early 1900s. In September 1897, she became the delegate of the Riom union, thus becoming a member of the Central Committee[132]. She was chosen as a representative of the federation on many occasions; at the *Comité Central du Droit Syndical* in May 1907 and December 1908 for instance[133]. Jacoby was eventually chosen as deputy secretary of the Central Committee in 1913, which made her the first woman to be part of its board. In addition, Jacoby took part in numerous conferences organised for the workers of the different tobacco factories, like the one in Lyons on the nine hour working day and union unity in November 1905[134] or in Orléans in October 1907[135].

Jacoby also got actively involved in the federative paper, as attested in several issues. She wrote a substantial number of articles dealing with a wide range of issues, such as mechanisation[136], democracy[137], the tobacco workers' federation[138], the eight-hour working day[139], the importance of solidarity[140], the *semaine anglaise*[141] or the quality of tobacco[142]. According to the decision taken at the 1913 congress, Jacoby became part of the editorial committee of the paper, which made her responsible for writing and publishing feature articles of general interest[143].

As a result of her militancy and devotion, Jacoby came to be well admired within the federation, all the more so because she was a married woman and a working mother, as attested below:

> *"Elle, ouvrière aussi, mère de famille comme la plupart de ses camarades, elle aurait besoin de son dimanche, du peu de répit qu'ont les ouvrières pour*

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[132] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1897, p. 1.
[133] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1907, p. 5.
L'Écho des tabacs, January 1909, p. 3.
[134] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1905, p. 3.
[135] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1907, p. 3.
[136] A. Jacoby, *"Progrès et progrès"*, L'Écho des tabacs, February 1900, p. 1.
[137] A. Jacoby, *"Démocratie"*, L'Écho des tabacs, November 1900, p. 2.
[138] A. Jacoby, *"Soeur Anne, ne vois-tu rien venir"*, L'Écho des tabacs, January 1901, p. 2.
[139] A. Jacoby, *"Journée de huit heures"*, L'Écho des tabacs, March 1903, p. 1.
[140] A. Jacoby, *"Solidarité"*, L'Écho des tabacs, May 1907, p. 1.
[141] A. Jacoby, *"Vers la semaine anglaise"*, L'Écho des tabacs, September 1913, p. 5.
[142] A. Jacoby, *"Constatation"*, L'Écho des tabacs, March 1914, p. 2.
[143] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1914, p.1.

mettre en ordre le ménage, mais quand le devoir l'appelle, elle quitte tout pour aller porter la bonne parole parmi les organisations ouvrières."[144]

She was also admired for her energy - she came to talk about herself in these terms: *"Et vous savez que Jacoby est de celles qui n'ont pas peur"*[145]- her oratory talents - she was commonly known as *"langue dorée"* for her elocution and the charm of her words - and her sincerity:

"La dévouée et infatigable conférencière (...) est une des meilleures propagandistes que nous connaissons. Son talent, fait de sincérité et de courage, a produit sur son auditoire un effet des plus marquants (...) Comme femme, elle sait dire, avec une émotion que chacun ressent, les misères, les souffrances qu'endurent ses soeurs dans les ateliers."[146]

After her husband's death in 1908, she came to devote more time to work, probably as the consequence of a lost of income, but never lost her notoriety as shown below:

"Elle n'a rien perdu de son autorité, ni de son renom, parmi ses camarades qui voient en cette femme digne et énergique, sans violence, le type de la vraie syndiquée."[147]

"Ni les difficultés ni les mauvais vouloirs n'arrêtèrent l'élan de Mme Jacoby. Elle avait une âme d'apôtre et partout elle semait la bonne parole."[148]

Her involvement went far beyond the federation. She offered constant support to other workers, whether male or female. In 1905, she argued in favour of the 1st May general strike, pledging that even though tobacco workers had already obtained a reduction in their working hours, it was also their duty to support the other workers[149]. At the 1906 congress of the federation she proposed to vote in favour of the weekly rest for the workers of the food industry[150].

As a member of the national CGT committee, she took part in many series of conferences organised by the confederation, as attested by La Voix du peuple[151] on many occasions. For instance, in May 1903, she gave a talk on women and work at the Nancy trade union centre[152]. In 1904, she got involved in a series of conferences organised by the textile union of the Somme department on the ten-hour working day[153]. In 1905, she was put in charge, with Merrheim[154], of organising conferences organised by the CGT commission on the eight-hour

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[144] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1901, p. 2.
[145] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1910, p. 8.
[146] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1907, p. 3.
[147] Marie-Louise Compain, op. cit., p. 41.
[148] Claude Réal, Le tabac et les allumettes, Paris, Doin, 1928, p. 282.
[149] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1906, p. 7.
[150] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1907, p. 5.
[151] CGT weekly paper.
[152] La Voix du peuple, 24 May 1903, p. 3.
[153] La Voix du peuple, 27 March 1904, p. 1.
[154] General secretary of the metal workers' federation.

working day and weekly rest in the *Centre* region[155]. She also led meetings on this topic in Bourges, Vierzon and Clermont-Ferrand, with her *"flamme révolutionnaire qui l'anime"* and *"langage pénétrant"*[156]. In 1906, she was to be found in St Etienne with her *"chaude et convaincante parole"* and Rive-de-Gier[157]. She was also chosen by the CGT to represent it during the pipe makers' strike in St Claude[158]. In 1907, her name was to be found in the list of the CGT speakers for the 13 July meetings on the arbitrary attitude of the government and young workers in the army. She consequently took part in various meetings in Paris[159].

At a federative level at least, it seems that Jacoby concentrated on practical issues. For instance, in September 1909, she was the only woman alongside Mallardé and Moritz to belong to the commission established by the *Ministre des finances* in order to express an opinion on the quality of tobacco offered to the public[160]. This issue seems to have been of particular interest to her, as attested by some of her interventions at congresses and her article in L'Écho des tabacs[161].

Yet, as a member of the national CGT committee, she also had to take side on theoretical issues with which the CGT was concerned at the time. Thus, in 1904, she took the opportunity of a series of conferences to show that unions should keep away from politics and expressed her belief in the general strike to take control of the means of production[162]. She therefore believed in the usefulness of the 1st May strike to raise workers' consciousness:

> *"La citoyenne Jacoby assiste depuis plusieurs années à la manifestation du 1er mai chez les camarades organisés. Depuis deux ans elle va dans la Haute Savoie chez les travailleurs de l'ameublement (...) Elle invite ses camarades à faire de même, car ce genre de manifestations est une excellente démonstration de la conscience du prolétariat."*[163]

On her mandate to the CGT in 1902 she insisted on pointing out her non-political approach and acknowledged the fact that economically speaking, the CGT was very useful[164]. She objected to the fact that the tobacco workers' federation should belong to the *Union des travailleurs de l'État* instead of the CGT, because she believed that it would make it stand

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[155] La Voix du peuple, 17 December 1902, p.1.
[156] La Voix du peuple, 24 December 1905, p. 2.
[157] La Voix du peuple, 1 January 1906, p. 3.
[158] La Voix du peuple, 16 September 1906, p. 1.
[159] La Voix du peuple, 14 July 1907, p. 1.
[160] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1909, p. 5.
[161] A. Jacoby, *"Constatations"*, L'Écho des tabacs, March 1914, p. 2.
[162] La Voix du peuple, 27 March 1904, p. 1.
[163] L'Écho des tabacs, May 1906, p. 6.
[164] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1903, p. 1.

apart from the rest of the working class[165]. She also proved herself to be in favour of the possibility of creating an international federation[166] and of internationalism in general[167].

Jacoby's militancy was not constrained to trade union activity even if it derived from it. In 1900, she was selected as a delegate for the feminist congress and subsequently published the report in L'Écho des tabacs. It is a shame that her report only summarised the congress without including any personal comments or views on the issues which had been debated. Yet, in 1901, she was selected as a delegate for the London peace conference where she took side against the war, showing how terrible it could be for a woman to give birth to a child for this child to become later a soldier and be killed at war. She then pledged men of all nations to prevent such a disaster to happen[168]. Jacoby went to this conference after being asked to do so by the Parisian union of female cashiers who wanted her to represent them there. Jacoby's own federation had not thought about sending a delegate[169]. In June 1901, she wrote an article on her delegation in La Voix du peuple, in which she included the following statements:

> *"Croyez bien que je vous ai représentés à cette grande manifestation d'humanité, avec tous les meilleurs sentiments de mon coeur, avec toute la tendresse que doit contenir le coeur de la femme pour l'humanité toute entière (...) car, à mon point de vue, le rôle de la femme est d'encourager, de consoler et d'aimer. Puisque la femme a été chassée de son foyer et du berceau de ses enfants (...) il est de son devoir de mère de s'organiser et de se défendre; il est de son devoir de sortir du rôle de douce brebis et de devenir une lionne (...) pour défendre ses petits, pour leur assurer un avenir meilleur."*[170]

As a whole, it can be seen from the above examples that Jacoby had many interests, not necessarily linked to the fact that she was a woman. It seems that to her the main issue was the cause of workers as a whole, not of women or tobacco workers in particular. Her militancy was based on a mixture of practical concerns, such as the working day, and theoretical issues, such as the use of the general strike as a revolutionary means. Yet, she was aware that she also had a role to play as a woman. As such, she sometimes stood up for women's interests against men. The admiration she gained from her militancy was partly due to the fact that she was a working woman, and even though she concentrated her energy on causes for the sake of the whole working class, she did not deny her womanhood. The last statement for instance,

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[165] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1902, p. 4.
[166] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1903, p. 3.
[167] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1901, p. 1.
[168] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1901, p. 2.
[169] A. Jacoby, *"Impresssions d'une déléguée à la manifestation de Londres"*, L'Écho des tabacs, September 1901, pp. 1-2.
[170] A. Jacoby, *"A toutes les organisations qui ont délégué à Londres la citoyenne Jacoby"*, La Voix du peuple, 30 June 1901, p. 2.

through the use of words such as *"sentiment"*, *"coeur"*, *"tendresse"* and *"humanité"* reflects the fundamental idea of the ultimate function of a woman: to cherish and protect, as if her womanhood was the basis, the justification of her militancy, the latter being a way to "*sortir du rôle de douce brebis et de devenir une lionne (...) pour défendre ses petits, pour leur assurer un avenir meilleur*". Therefore, Jacoby could be regarded as a typical example of a woman who tried to combine her militancy as a worker with her militancy as a woman, but who gave priority to the working class struggle, convinced that the latter was the key to women's liberation.

Women and feminism[171]

Knowing that certain militants like Jacoby believed that women's emancipation would be reached through the emancipation of the whole working class is one important element in the understanding of their approach of trade unionism in relation to women. Yet, this needs to be complemented with what was actually meant by women's liberation and how this emancipation was supposed to be achieved. Chapter 2 has examined the way male trade unionists perceived feminism, both as a movement and as a frame of concepts. It is now time to consider the other side of the story, that is to say how women, and female workers in particular, perceived feminism and to what extent they used it as a means to improve their conditions as women, both at work and in society as a whole.

This question cannot be dealt with without defining feminism itself. According to Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard for instance, feminism is double-sided, it is a combination of awareness and action; an awareness of women as human bodies different from men and with special needs, and an action to change their family, social and professional status[172]. In addition, according to Claire Moses, *"feminism [is] an ideology shaped by historical phenomena which is based on the recognition that women constitute a group that is wrongfully oppressed by male-defined values and male-controlled institutions of social, political, cultural and familial power"*[173]. In a way, it could be said that feminism was to women what socialism was to the working class; it was a concept, available for those who

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[171] It must be borne in mind that this section is dependent upon the information available on women in unions at the time. As female tobacco workers were much more involved, more information was available on them, which explains why this section will devote much more time on them.

[172] Marie- Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France, Anthropos, Paris, 1978, pp. 6-7.

[173] Claire Moses Goldberg, French Feminism in the 19th Century, Albany, New York State, University of New York Press, 1984, p. 7.

would be interested in it, but it did not mean that all women would or should get involved. Consequently, the definition depended on this degree of involvement; an awareness for those who recognised the gender differences and the way they define human behaviour and the power struggle; an action for those who wanted to do something about it; an ideology for those who based their comprehension of society on the power struggle between genders. It is this degree of involvement which would explain for instance why Jacoby was a socialist before being a feminist; her ideology was based on the class struggle, and her feminism was dependent upon it.

Another aspect worth particular attention is the above notion described by Claire Moses as *"historical phenomena"*, which suggests that feminism is a direct product of its time and cannot be comprehended without reference to a given period, therefore to a set of rules, or sets of rules, according to which women and their oppression are defined. This is of particular relevance for the period under scrutiny in so far as between 1890 and 1914, what was described as feminism included a variety of schools, tendencies and groups, among which were reformist feminism and socialist feminism.

As seen in the previous chapter, attempts were made by feminists to create unions, but these unions were based on the acceptance of the capitalist system and therefore were seen as some kind of bourgeois charities by most trade unionists. Ideally speaking, female workers should have been in the best position to constitute a compromise, a synthesis, between feminism and trade unionism in the sense that they were women belonging to the working class. Yet, this synthesis never happened before 1914, because, in practice, they did not belong to any world; they could identify themselves neither with bourgeois women who did not need to work for a living, nor with their fellow male workers whose ideology was male-based, as deplored by Marie-Louise Compain at the time. After asking *"Dans le double mouvement qui entraîne aujourd'hui la femme vers son émancipation intégrale et l'ouvrier à la conquête de l'égalité économique, quelle est la place prise par l'ouvrière?"*, she gave an answer implying that woman's place was almost non-existent[174]. By being at the crossing between too worlds and too different ideologies, female workers could not take full part in the two movements and had often to take sides when they decided to get involved at all. Yet, even when they decided to take sides, they became the means of their own cause, deprived of responsibilities and the

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[174] Cited by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France, op. cit., p. 80.

power to make decisions, the latter being taken for them either by bourgeois feminists or by male trade unionists.

Three affairs marked the conflicting history of the relationship between trade unionism and feminism throughout the period under scrutiny, and all three showed to what extent female workers were deprived of independence and could not take control of their own destiny, whatever their side[175].

In 1901, some male strikers from a printing house in Nancy were replaced by female workers. It was certainly not the first time women acted as strike-breakers, but what gave importance to this strike was the fact that the female workers belonged to a union which had been formed under Marguerite Durand's authority and that the powerful Book federation was notoriously misogynist[176]. This incident was regarded as the first opportunity for feminists to confront a male union with its own attitude against women, but it also fuelled the federation's anti-feminism and gave it more reason to remain hostile towards female workers. So, it could be argued that the latter were used by feminists to provoke male chauvinism, which resulted in alienating them even more.

The second affair was to put feminists and female trade unionists together. In 1906, the *Chambre des députés* voted a bill for the creation of an *Office du travail féminin*. Eager to see the realisation of this project as soon as possible, Marguerite Durand decided to organise a congress which was held in Paris in March 1907 and included fifty-five female union delegates. Some divergence of interests between feminists and trade unionists soon emerged, as attested by an article in L'Humanité published at the end of the month:

> *"A mesure que se poursuivent les séances du congrès du travail féminin, deux tendances s'y accentuent qui ne paraissent pas devoir mener les congressistes à un accord final... Les représentantes d'organisations syndicales défilent à la tribune, non sans poser d'embarrassantes questions."*[177]

A female trade unionist, who happened to start her speech with *"Camarades, Mesdames"* and carried on relating everything to the social question came to be criticised by Marguerite Durand in the following terms:

> *"Cette question, c'est entendu, est digne d'études et d'intérêt, mais nous ne sommes pas là pour la résoudre."*[178]

Such an incident shows the incompatibility of both worlds; workers wished to make it clear that they were not to be mixed with bourgeois feminists, whereas the latter made it evident

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[175] For further detail on these three affairs, see in particular: ibid., pp. 256-268.
[176] It has to be borne in mind that the latter accepted women in its ranks only in 1910.
[177] L'Humanité, 27 March 1907.
[178] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France, op. cit., p. 261.

that issues related to class had no place in such a congress. In addition, Marguerite Durand made it obvious that she intended to keep control of the debates taking place at this congress. This kind of paternalistic attitude could be as intimidating as the paternalistic attitude of male trade unionists. One may wonder what Marguerite Durand expected when she invited trade unionists, if the latter were not allowed to talk about the reasons why they belonged to a union. She gave priority to the feminist aspect of the congress and expected everybody to do the same, whereas female trade unionists were here to represent female workers, therefore to give priority to the notion of work. Yet, work was exactly what drew the limits between female trade union militants and bourgeois feminist militants. Therefore, it is not surprising that no consensus could be reached and that the congress did not follow all the female workers' expectations.

The last, but not least, and better known affair took place in Lyons in 1913. In April, Emma Couriau, a typographer, wrote a letter to the local union, expressing her wish to subscribe. Yet, not only was she refused, but her husband was also expelled from the union according to a decision taken in 1906 stating that a member who would let his wife work as a typographer would be rejected. Louis Couriau himself did not hesitate to criticise such a paradoxical, chauvinistic attitude:

> *"Le syndicat préfère sans doute voir les femmes s'éreinter nuit et jour sur une machine à coudre, comme c'est le cas d'une typote que son mari, d'après les ordres du comité, a obligé à quitter la composition."*[179]

Considering the lack of support the Couriau couple received from the trade unionist side, they soon turned to feminists, via the *Fédération féministe du Sud-Est* in particular. The latter did not take long to realise the polemical potential such an affair could have and soon launched a press campaign which got trade unionists' attention. This series of events shows the extent to which Emma Couriau was left with no alternative; incapable of dealing with the matter on her own initiative and being rejected by one side, she had to appeal for support from the other side which took advantage of the situation to attack and criticise the chauvinism of the labour movement.

The positive effect of this Affair was undeniable in the sense that it started an interesting debate on the relationship between trade unionism and feminism and made the CGT realise that it could no longer afford to ignore women. Only a handful of educated militants, such as Marie Guillot, were to give feminism some credit; aware that the class struggle was not

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[179] Louis Couriau, La Bataille syndicaliste, 14 September 1913.

enough to emancipate women, they saw its necessity. Yet, they were also aware that both struggles were at this stage incompatible and should be led separately, that is why they also believed that feminists should not try to get involved in economic matters which were to remain the union domain[180]. The economic oppression of female workers was to be dealt with within unions by trade unionists who knew the meaning of this oppression:

> *"La lutte des classes sera menée efficacement grâce à un accord absolu entre les hommes et les femmes marchant à l'assaut des privilèges de leurs maîtres, cela sera lorsqu'ils recevront la même éducation, lorsqu'ils auront les mêmes droits, lorsqu'ils sauront se traiter en camarades, en amis, en égaux."*[181]

Such a statement shows the importance which was to be given to education in the class struggle. Yet equal education would mean that both men and women would get an education different from the one they actually received in the present society. On the one hand, Marie Guillot accepted the fact that women lacked the education which would enable them to react to their exploitation as workers and understand the need to unionise:

> *"La femme est ignorante des conditions de la lutte économique; elle a vécu en général, une vie étroite... La nécessité de l'organisation pour se défendre contre l'organisation patronale? Elle vous répond: celui qui a de l'argent est toujours le plus fort et on ne peut rien contre lui. C'est le fruit de sa propre expérience."*[182]

She agreed that women had to gain a class identity, and in order to do so, they would have to be taught values usually related to men, or at least abandon the prejudices they had about their own gender . On the other hand, she was one of the rare militants to claim that males should also be educated, or re-educated, to change their views on women and accept them as *"comrades"*, instead of competitors, *"friends"*, instead of enemies, and *"equals"*, instead of inferiors. Thus changing both women's and men's attitudes was the only way to gain equality. This is why for a woman to take the double burden as an excuse not to militate was accepting the order feminists were trying to transform, and therefore should be regarded as a false excuse to cover a lack of devotion to the struggle. Thus, in 1912, Marie Guillot answered a female teacher who claimed that she could not attend meetings because she had two children in these terms:

> *"Pourquoi votre mari ne ferait-il pas alors son tour de garde et pourquoi ne sortiriez-vous pas ce jour là? Pourquoi la mère est-elle seule esclave de l'enfant (...) Ne faut-il pas réfuter cette théorie qui fait de la servitude de la femme la rançon de la quiétude, du bien être, de la liberté de l'homme? (...)*

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[180] For further information on Marie Guillot see: Slava Liszek, Marie Guillot, Paris, L'harmattan, 1994.
[181] Cited by Maïté Albistour and Daniel Armogathe, Histoire du féminisme français, Vol. 2, Paris, Éditions des Femmes, 1977, pp. 536-537.
[182] Cited by Madeleine Colin, Ce n'est pas d'aujourd'hui, Paris, Éditions Sociales, 1975, p. 198.

> *La femme n'est pas une bête de somme créée pour délivrer l'homme des soucis matériels de l'existence (...), elle a besoin de sa part de vie intellectuelle et de liberté."*[183]

However, as noticed by Jean Rabaut, the idea that housework and family duties should be shared by both genders remained rare even within the feminist movement[184]. Even women were not deprived of views of themselves as housewives, as organisers of the household rather than producers[185], because they took some pride in dealing with matters which were allocated to them by tradition. Thus, during the 1898 tobacco workers' congress, the feminist Marie Bonnevial was invited to give a speech in which she developed the idea that women should spend less time at work to devote more time in their home[186]. Such an attitude was all the more acceptable amongst bourgeois women since they did not have to work outside their home anyway, but what about female workers? Since this attitude was widely spread amongst bourgeois women who declared themselves feminists, and that their militancy rarely changed their conceptualisation and distribution of roles in the private sphere, it can be expected that female workers were even more likely to adopt the same attitude. In this respect, female militants in the hat industry do not appear to have been an exception:

> *"L'ouvrière préférerait mille fois de rester chez elle que d'aller se faire exploiter, ou de mettre, lors d'un chômage, ses hardes au mont de piété. Allons donc, soeurs garnisseuses, relevez-vous, organisez-vous, non pour l'amour des idées modernes ou de l'émancipation, car nous ne pouvons pas encore nous dire les égales des hommes, mais il faut agir quand même."*[187]

Such a statement simply reflects an awareness of gender differences, a first degree of involvement before action. Yet, it has been seen in Chapter 1 that a mass movement was more likely to generate action, and therefore concrete improvement if not transformation. So, the fact that women's numbers in hatters' unions were restricted must be taken into account to explain why they were not ready yet to take action in order to change gendered roles in the home, in unions and in society in general.

In the case of the tobacco industry, the question is to know whether the fact that women were in the majority in unions also made a difference by generating some feminist awareness, action or ideology and if so, whether this contributed to change female tobacco workers' conceptualisation of their role as women. Evidence of a feminist awareness from some

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[183] Cited by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Féminisme et syndicalisme en France, op. cit., p. 181.
[184] Jean Rabaut, op. cit., p. 172.
[185] See in particular:
Anna Lampérière, Le Rôle social de la femme: devoirs, droits, éducation, Paris, F. Alcan, 1898, 175 p.
Marguerite Martin, Les Droits de la femme, Paris, Marcel Rivière, 1912, pp. 36-37.
[186] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1899, p. 3.
[187] Julie Durst, *"A méditer pour les garnisseuses de France"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 20 May 1894, p. 2.

militants has been found on several occasions. During the general meeting of Le Gros Caillou union in December 1897, Lelorrain proposed that all the female workers should buy the feminist paper La Fronde. His proposal was approved unanimously by the audience[188]. Awareness also led to action in some cases. In March 1899, Mme Vincent from La Fronde wrote to the Central Committee to ask if the federation would send two delegates to the 1900 international feminist congress. After a discussion, in which, according to L'Écho des tabacs, only men got involved, *Citoyennes* Alpeter and Jacoby were chosen as delegates[189]. This kind of action was also seen at a local level: in January 1908, for instance, the union in Le Havre announced that it would organise a conference on the emancipation of women[190].

Yet, the meaning of emancipation was not always clear and at times somewhat contradictory. In some cases, emancipation meant equal treatment with men. For instance, at the 1894 congress, Mme Lavergne asked, in the name of her union, for the pensions to be of 600F for both males and females, after 30 years of service and 55 of age[191]. This idea was resumed by Jacoby at the 1901 congress when she accused the latter of being too modest in its claims and demanded equal pension *"les exigences de la vie étant les mêmes pour la femme que pour l'homme"*[192].

Yet, the idea of equality could lead to some confusion and reveal a deeply-rooted, almost unconscious, acceptance of the paternalistic order. This was well illustrated when the time came to argue about the allocation of clothes between men and women. It was decided at the 1906 congress that all the workers, with no sex distinction, should be provided with work clothes as soon as possible[193]. One year later, the proposal that the administration should supply clothes to women was voted[194]. The 1908 congress sent a delegation to the central management to get clothes for women, claiming that, since men were entitled to get some, the same should be applied to women[195]. Yet, at the 1911 congress, because men had still not received satisfaction, it was proposed that only the material would be supplied to women so that they could make their own work clothes. Jacoby refused this idea vehemently by using the

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[188] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1898, p. 3.
[189] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1899, p. 1.
[190] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1908, p. 6.
[191] Troisième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 13.
[192] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1901, p. 4.
[193] *"Les ouvriers et ouvrières des tabacs"*, L'Humanité, 1 July 1906, p. 3.
[194] *"Les travailleurs des tabacs"*, L'Humanité, 28 June 1907, p. 3.
[195] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1908, p. 6.

arguments of her female responsibilities and lack of time, not the fact that men did not have to make theirs:

> *"Quand j'ai donné ma journée de travail à l'administration, j'ai, en rentrant chez moi, des soins à donner à mon ménage; je n'ai pas le temps de me mettre à confectionner des tabliers; je ne veux pas réduire mon salaire pour en payer la confection. Je dis des vêtements confectionnés."*[196]

The examination of claims supported by women proved to be a good way of assessing how deeply rooted male dominant values were in women's minds. In general, female tobacco militants agreed that their womanhood should be taken as a justification for reforms and improvements from the government. They therefore agreed that they constituted a group who needed, or deserved, better treatment because of their specific social role and condition:

> *"Jacoby expose la nécessité des réformes présentées et qui tendent à l'amélioration des conditions de la femme pour laquelle la sollicitude du Parlement doit être en éveil, en raison de son rôle social dans la société actuelle."*[197]

Some claims were neutral in the sense that they addressed women's needs as procreators and could only be of benefit to them. Thus, in March 1903, Mme Sarzier claimed that women who gave birth to twins should get twice the birth allocation considering that the costs were double, and that the allocation should also be given for still-born babies since their mothers still had to pay the midwife[198].

Yet, other claims constituted an acknowledgement of their inferior status as workers and tended to give priority to men and be detrimental to women. For instance, during the 1907 congress, when discussing the allocation of tobacco for men, one of the male delegates declared that the same should be applied for women, but Mme Sarzier answered that men should be given priority; *"laissons les hommes obtenir la dégustation, nous verrons après pour les femmes"*[199]. This could be linked to the fact that smoking was more of a male concern or occupation than a female one. Yet, if the allocation was considered as a right for all workers, giving priority to men could be viewed as a discriminatory practice supported by women to the detriment of their own right.

However, in other cases, this priority given to men could have a double meaning, serving men's interests while being of some advantage for women. Some claims regarding work in the

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[196] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 98.
[197] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1909, p. 4.
[198] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1903, p. 2.
[199] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1908, p. 7.

moistening work shops were a good illustration of this kind of practice. During the 1897 congress, Mme Sarzier was the one to claim in the name of Le Gros Caillou section that the moistening process should be performed by men in order to leave more work to them:

> *"Nous ne voulons pas que la femme s'empare de la mouillade afin de ne pas retirer le travail aux hommes (..) Nous demandons que la mouillade reste pour les hommes, ce métier n'est pas assimilable aux femmes."*[200]

However, two years later, when representing the Marseilles union, she mentioned the fact that her female workers did not want to work there, not to give work to men, but because this job was too difficult for women[201]. Similarly, female workers in Le Havre agreed with the suppression of moistening performed by women, giving the following excuse:

> *"Elles sont mouillées des pieds à la tête; les toiles dont elles se servent pour faire les ballots de tabacs sont trop grandes et trop lourdes."* [202]

Mme Le Fell added:

> *"Nous demandons également des sabots, des jupes et des tabliers pour les femmes et des costumes imperméables pour les hommes."*[203]

This last example is worth particular attention in the sense that it shows that women acknowledged their physical inferiority and wanted to be treated accordingly, but at the same time, they would be quite happy to work with just a skirt and an apron while men would be provided with water-proof overalls, once again accepting discriminatory practice, in the same workshops, therefore, in the same working conditions.

The same could be said when referring to money matters. The 1910 congress proposed that the congress report would be published in a brochure and that buying the latter would be made compulsory for all members. Several women delegates intervened to show the difficulty they would meet in having this proposal accepted by their female members considering their financial situation[204]. In addition, the 1913 congress decided to create an orphanage for the children of deceased tobacco workers and finance its running by extra subscriptions and donations. Yet, according to an article by Eugène Nublat published in L'Écho des tabacs in March 1914, this project was far from being approved unanimously; some female unionists refused to subscribe, accusing the federation of trying to make money by any means, especially by selling the congress reports[205]. This criticism reflected once again the financial pressure

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[200] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1898, p. 4.
[201] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1899, p. 1.
[202] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 123.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 97.
[205] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1914, p. 3.

which could be put on women in comparison to men, yet the issue of equal pay for equal work does not seem to have been a matter of great concern among female workers, as if they accepted the fact that they should be paid less than men[206]. Even Jacoby failed to perceive the limit of her argument on this matter:

> *"Depuis trop longtemps on nous donne un salaire stupide pour le temps passé dans l'administration, sous prétexte que ce salaire est un salaire d'appoint. La femme qui a ses enfants à élever paie son loyer la même chose que l'homme; son blanchissage la même chose; elle a besoin de travailler toute la journée pour élever sa famille."*[207]

Even when she declared that women should not have to take time off to make their own work clothes because this would lead to a pay decrease and criticised the idea of extra income, claiming that women had the same expenses as men, she argued that women had to work a full day to make a decent living instead of asking for equal pay. Therefore, according to this argument, women should be entitled to work longer hours if they wanted to reach the same wage as men. Yet, at the same time, the federation, and women, asked for shorter working days. This contradiction came to cause some problems amongst female workers on several occasions. As early as the 1894 congress, several militants pointed out the difficulty they would meet in making the eight-hour working day accepted by the majority in so far as most women were against it because they feared that it would involved a decrease in their wages. Yet again, in 1911, Jacoby, instead of asking for a pay increase or equal wages, showed that the introduction of the nine-hour working day had not led to this decrease therefore that the eight-hour working day would not either[208].

The idea of shorter working days and weeks was in fact linked to the more global idea that women's emancipation could only be achieved via their return to the home to fulfil their real role as mothers, wives and housewives. As illustrated below, numerous interventions from women expressing this view were found, whether in the federative paper or in congresses, and many claims were expressed by women as a means to achieve this goal.

First of all, women had to receive more instruction because they were responsible for the upbringing and education of their children, as put by Jacoby at a meeting of the Pantin and Aubervilliers unions in 1902:

> *"La femme a aussi le devoir et le droit de s'instruire, puisque c'est à elle qu'il appartient d'instruire les enfants (...) C'est aujourd'hui que l'homme paie la*

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[206] For instance, during the 1891 tobacco workers' congress, *Citoyenne* Jay promoted an increase in wages, with a minimum of 4.50F for men and 2.75F for women.
Premier congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 70.

[207] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 98.

[208] Ibid., p. 99.

faute commise en instituant la loi du droit de l'homme et du citoyen sans s'occuper des droits de la femme."[209]

It must be noticed that during a conference in Riom in 1898 A. Jacoby had defined these rights in terms of staying at home to raise children[210].

It was also agreed that women had to spend less time in the factory to enable them to spend more time with their children, to increase job opportunities for men, thus contributing to making society better by reducing crime and generating better beings:

"Pour la plupart d'entre nous, mères de famille, le temps que nous ne donnerions pas à la production, serait consacré à élever, à éduquer nos enfants, et par notre action, en conservant du travail pour d'autres prolétaires et en restreignant l'armée du vice, du crime, en ayant plus de temps pour exercer notre devoir de mère (seul rôle que le femme mère devrait avoir dans une société bien organisée) nous pourrions donner une génération d'hommes, forts au physique et au moral, véritables valeurs dans la marche vers l'évolution constante, vers l'élévation de l'humanité."[211]

The idea that shorter hours would also enable women to become better housewives was found at every level of the federative hierarchy. In 1892, Mme Fraxe made the following comment:

"Nos femmes, après dix heures d'un labeur incessant, dur et nuisible à leur santé, sont obligées, après vivement avoir fait le dîner, de songer au déjeuner des moutards pour le lendemain, à raccommoder leurs effets, etc. (...) Obligées, le dimanche, d'aller laver le linge de la famille, c'est à peine si elles ont le temps de se changer elles mêmes, quand elles ont songé à leurs proches!"[212]

This was echoed in November 1897 when a female worker from the Nancy union published an article in L'Écho des tabacs to defend the eight-hour working day, arguing that it would give women more time to go and do the shopping[213]. Similarly, in October 1901, Jacoby declared as follows:

"Lorsque nous, femmes, avons terminé notre journée de travail à l'atelier, ne sommes nous pas obligées de la recommencer à la maison pour réparer les vêtements de notre mari et de nos enfants, et préparer leur nourriture?"[214]

The above examples show that there was no question of changing roles between genders in the private sphere. These women did not call into question the fact that they had to do all the housekeeping, all the shopping, all the washing and hold all the responsibilities related to children. In this connection, at a conference in Riom in 1901, Jacoby did not hide her

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[209] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1902, p. 1.
[210] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1898, p. 2.
[211] Eugénie Marchand, a female delegate from Lille, L'Écho des tabacs, December 1900, p. 4.
[212] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, op. cit., p. 88.
[213] *"La journée de huit heures aux tabacs"*, L'Écho des tabacs, November 1897, p. 2.
[214] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1901, p. 3.

admiration for English trade unions and workers' organisations in which women were taught how to become good housekeepers[215]. This is in a way the sign that Jacoby herself did not recognise trade union militancy as a role suitable for women, as if a good female trade unionist should be more concerned with housekeeping than improving her working conditions because, at the end of the day, her real place was at home and her real function was not that of a worker working outside the home.

Conclusion

Françoise Blum, Anne Marie Sohn or Slava Liszek have already shown how difficult it could be to give responsibilities to women even in federations acknowledging their capacities as militants[216], and this chapter has demonstrated that the same could be said about the hat and tobacco industries prior to 1914. Although quantity was a decisive factor in shaping the pattern of qualitative representation, the latter remained limited because of other dominant factors. In the hat industry, the qualitative representation of women was proportionally determined according to the few number of women in unions. In the case of the tobacco industry, one cannot deny the fact that the presence of a majority of women played a part in the sense that the tobacco workers' federation was one of the first to give some responsibility, although limited, to women at the top of the hierarchy. Yet, this example has revealed the extent to which gender was a determinant, crucial factor in the choice of representatives. There was no question of proportional representation. Some women came to be represented by men, in accordance with the recognition of the paternalistic order, and women were to represent only their gender.

Despite their positive attitude towards women in principle, the examination of the practice in both federations has shown a different picture; they both failed to treat women on the same footing as men in terms of hierarchy. So, it is not gender itself, but the behaviour and values related to it, which determined women's degree of participation. Membership and militancy were not necessarily male prerogatives, but power and influence certainly were, even when women were in the majority. This confirms the argument, of Claude Alzon for instance, that

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[215] L'Écho des tabacs, August 1901, p. 1.

[216] See:
Françoise Blum, Féminisme et syndicalisme: les femmes dans la fédération de l'habillement, 1914-1935, Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris I, 1978, 205p.
Anne Marie Sohn, *"Exemplarité et limites de la participation à la vie syndicale: les institutrices de la CGTU"*, Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine, July-September 1977.
Slava Liszek, Marie Guillot, op. cit.

men could not make women their companion in the class struggle without putting into question their male domination over them[217]. Because they were not ready to do so, they reproduced paternalistic patterns, not only to confirm their domination, but undoubtedly to prevent women from gaining too much authority and power to alter this pattern; the best way to prevent any revolution is to take control of its potential protagonists. But this means that the protagonists are likely to be controlled and brainwashed if not convinced. This chapter has demonstrated that despite their majority in unions, female tobacco workers failed to offer another role model to women both at home, in unions and in society in general. They, consciously or unconsciously accepted , reproduced and prolonged the paternalistic order and the models offered by men in the way they were described in Chapter 2. They did not try to escape from these models by redefining a different role for women; for instance, they did not call into question the distribution of roles at home or wage differences at work, hence acknowledging their inferior status. Even the question of shorter hours was debatable in the sense that campaigning for shorter hours at work was a way to shorten their working life, that is to reduce the reasons why they should join unions. The goal of any militant was to militate in order to suppress any reason to militate, but the motivation and interpretation of militancy differed between genders: for women it was more a matter of suppressing work than the need for a trade union in the work place.

This acceptance of the paternalistic order and the idea of the male as the bread winner and the female as the angel of the home appears somewhat contradictory if judged according to radical feminist views. Yet, in accordance to the definition of feminism given by Claire Moses, this acceptance must be put in the historical context of this study. It has been seen that some female tobacco worker militants, like Jacoby in particular, could combine an interest in feminism and ideas about the oppression of women with the wish to return to home. For most of these female workers, work was not a choice or a means to get an independent life, but a necessity, therefore an oppression. Their wish to return to home was one of the direct results of this necessity. Allowing women to stay at home did not necessarily mean that all the women would do it, but that they would have the choice between work and home. In economic terms, this is the whole idea of feminism; to give women an equal status with men on the labour market so that they can gain more freedom of choice. It could be argued that these militants' feminist views were limited; they were aware of women's oppression and sometimes this led to

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[217] Claude Alzon, La Femme potiche et la femme boniche; pouvoir bourgeois et pouvoir mâle, Paris, F. Maspero, 1973, pp. 25-106.

action, but they did not regard feminism as an ideology. They kept perceiving their oppression in terms of class more than in terms of gender and did not offer any other model to women. However, it must be borne in mind that they were militating in a union, not in a feminist movement. When considering what they tried to achieve for female workers, as well as their conviction that they were doing good in women's interest and for women's well being, it could be said that these female tobacco worker militants were feminists in the same way as they were militants; they gave priority to practice and immediate improvements rather than theory and ideological debates. They therefore gave a concrete example of what Marie Guillot once said about the relationship between feminism and trade unionism:

> *"Le meilleur moyen de faire du féminisme au syndicat, c'est encore de faire du syndicalisme."*[218]

[218] Cited by Laure Adler in Les Femmes politiques, Paris, Seuil, 1993, p. 74.

CHAPTER 4:

WOMEN ON STRIKE

Militancy is always linked to a cause and the struggle to achieve the aims of this cause. It is also related to the belief that situations or conditions can be improved if not transformed. The working class struggle took different aspects, depending on the strategy workers wanted to adopt. Some chose politics, others trade unionism. Some chose reformism and favoured parliamentary legislation, others syndicalism and direct action. Yet, some also chose not to belong to any movement, and this was particularly common amongst women as shown in the previous chapter. This did not necessarily mean that they were indifferent to their conditions as workers; it could also be a matter of the inadequacy or unsuitability of the means available to them. Whatever, working class militancy was neither the attribute nor the prerogative of only those who belong to a party or a union, especially when considering the fact that, historically speaking, labour agitation preceded the official formation of unions and parties. It has already been suggested on several occasions in Chapter 3 that the form or pattern of militancy adopted by women was not necessarily the same as the one adopted by men. They were under-represented in traditionally masculine places or forms of expression, like unions, congresses or federative papers for instance. Therefore, when in unions, female militancy was conditioned and determined according to male militancy. Yet, it could be envisaged that women used other places or forms of expression to express their militancy. This was the topic of a paper given by Michelle Perrot at a colloquium in Vincennes in 1978[1], in which she urged researchers to look at women's militancy from a different angle than the one usually applied to examine militancy. Perrot pointed out the fact that women's territory was more communitarian, more localist, and more populist than men's. In this context, strikes can be seen as a very interesting case study to examine the relationship between the local environment and female militancy. They constitute the perfect ground where the labour movement as ideology and the labour movement as action can meet. Women's attitudes in unions proved to be more practical than ideological, so it could be expected that women might favour strikes more than union membership because they represented a direct and concrete way of achieving

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[1] Michelle Perrot, *"Les femmes et la classe ouvrière"*, Colloque de Vincennes, 16 December 1978.
See also:
Raymond A. Jonas, *"Equality in difference? Patterns of feminine labor militancy in nineteenth-century France"*, Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Vol. 15, 1988, pp. 291-299.

goals. The question now is whether these views could be applied to female tobacco workers and hatters. After presenting strikes in both industries in general terms[2], this chapter will concentrate on the relationship between women and strikes in order to assess the levels of their participation as well as its pattern and significance. Particular attention will also be given to the main factors that could have contributed to create differences in participation between industries, such as the unions' and women's attitude to strikes. The final section will examine in detail the way women got involved in strikes in order to assess whether they regarded them as the epitome of class solidarity and to what extent they considered them as a ground to express their discontent and desire for improvement in their own way.

General background

The law legalising strikes was passed in France in 1864 and originally applied to any industrial worker, including those working in the public services. In February 1896, the *Sénat* decided to withdraw the right to strike from railways, arsenal and ammunition workers, but maintained it for the other state factory workers[3]. Therefore, as opposed to what happened to their right to form unions, tobacco workers were never put under specific conditions in terms of their right to go on strike. The first strike in the tobacco industry actually occurred in 1870 in Toulouse[4]. 13 others took place before 1890[5], so by this date, strikes were no novelty for these workers. They witnessed 55 additional strikes between 1893 and 1914, that is to say an average of 2.5 strikes a year. The number varied from none in 1896, 1909 and 1913, to nine in 1902 and 1905, and tended to decrease from 1905 onwards (See appendix 4.1).

This number was much higher in the hat industry. Hatters went on strike 133 times within the same period, that is to say six times a year on average. The number of strikes varied from one in 1898 and 1904 to 13 in 1912 and 1913. Unlike in the tobacco industry, the number of hatters' strikes tended to increase from 1905 onwards (See appendix 4.1).

The fact that hatters tended to go on strike more frequently than tobacco workers, and that their frequency tended to increase towards the end of the period, could indicate that not only

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[2] The term "strike" must be understood in a very broad sense. According to the Statistiques des grèves, a strike could take various forms, from a few hour stoppage of work in the same workshop, to a movement involving hundreds of workers from different factories and lasting several months.

[3] Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, pp. 392-393.

[4] For further information on the female tobacco workers' strikes in Toulouse in the 1870s, see: Rolande Trempé, *"Les cigarières toulousaines en grève, 1870-1875"*, Groupe de recherche interdisciplinaire d'étude des femmes, Vol. 16, 1980, pp. 53-64.

[5] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 416-426.

did hatters have more often reasons to complain about their work, but also their working environment and conditions did not tend to improve much with time. This would confirm what was said in Chapter 1 about the privileged situation of tobacco workers. However, other factors must be taken into consideration before making such an assumption. For instance, Michelle Perrot was one of the first to prove that *"la grève est un privilège de nantis"*[6], and that the most oppressed were not necessarily those who went on strike the most. So, however informative the frequency of strikes in the two industries is in giving an idea of how familiar workers were with this form of protest, it does not allow any conclusion to be drawn at this stage. Frequency in itself does not mean a lot about the striking habits of workers in the sense that a big strike could have more impact than several little ones for instance. This is why the above figures must be complemented with the number of strikers.

In the tobacco industry, the number of strikers varied considerably from one year to the next. 31 594 tobacco workers went on strike between 1893 and 1914, thus averaging 1 436 strikers per year. The peak was reached in 1902, the year of their general strike, with a total number of 14 872 strikers (See appendix 4.2). Strikers in the hat industry were far from reaching the same figures, with a total of 9 658, that is to say an average of 439 per year. The minimum was reached in 1898 with 40 workers and the maximum in 1910 with 1 095 (See appendix 4.3).

When combined with the number of strikes, the above figures indicate that strikes in the tobacco industry tended to be much bigger than in the hat industry, the average being 574 strikers per strike for the former and 72 for the latter over the period. As a whole, tobacco workers' strikes were more than twice as big as the national average, with the latter being 210 workers per strike between 1893 and 1914. This general tendency was confirmed on a yearly basis, but this did not mean that tobacco workers' strikes always involved more strikers than hatters'. In 1910 for instance, the average was 156 in the hat industry against 29 in the tobacco industry (See appendix 4.4).

Another important aspect to consider is the proportion of strikers in relation to the industrial working population. In the tobacco industry this proportion was respectively 0% in 1896[7],

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[6] Michelle Perrot, Les Ouvriers en grève, Vol. 1, Paris, Mouton, 1973, p. 160.

[7] According to the Statistiques des grèves, no strike occurred in the tobacco industry in 1896. Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1896.

3.94% in 1901 and 5.9% in 1906. In the hat industry, it was 0.56% in 1896, 1.14% in 1901, 0.67% in 1906 and 0.26% in 1911[8]. These figures reveal that, on the whole, striking was far from widely spread in both industries, but that, relatively and comparatively speaking, people working in the tobacco industry were slightly more familiar with striking than those working in the hat industry. The same could be said when comparing the proportion of strikers with the number of workers in both industries. In 1901, 3.95% of the workers' population in the tobacco industry took part in strikes, against 1.93% in the hat industry. In 1906, this proportion was respectively 6.55% against 1.56%[9].

The low proportion of strikers in relation to the working population can be easily explained by the fact that most of the strikes were local, therefore occurred within a very small proportion of the total working population. Only a general, national strike would be likely to raise this figure substantially, but, as will be seen later, this kind of strikes was rare. This is why it seems more appropriate to examine the proportion of strikers in the workforce usually employed in the businesses where the strikes took place. In the tobacco industry, this proportion passed from 76.25% in 1895 to 100% in 1914, with a minimum of 5.36% in 1903. The difference from one year to another shows that some strikes involved a majority of workers while others only gathered a few workers usually employed in the same workshop. However, the average of 52.9% for the period between 1895 and 1914 reveals that, in most cases, the majority of tobacco workers got involved in strikes occurring in their factory (See appendix 4.5). Exactly the same could be said about the hat industry. Although the proportion decreased from 31.28% in 1895 to 15.04% in 1914, it went over 60% in 1900, from 1902 to 1906, as well as in 1909, 1910 and 1912, thus securing an average of 53% over the period (See appendix 4.6). So, in both cases, although strikes were mostly local, when they occurred in one given factory or workshop, they tended to involve the majority of the workforce.

Women and strikes

As the majority of the workforce was feminine in both industries, the question to be answered now is whether the majority of strikers was feminine too, or at least, to what extent the

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[8] These figures have been established according to the following documents:
Appendices 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 and 1.11.
Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, op. cit., 1896, 1901, 1906, 1911.

[9] These figures have been established according to the following documents:
Appendices 1.8 and 1.9.
Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, op. cit., 1901, 1906.

proportion of women in these industries was reflected in their participation in labour conflicts. According to Madeleine Guilbert, women in general were not great fans of picket lines and direct opposition to employers[10]. The general proportion of women strikers was very variable from one year to another, with the maximum being 21.5% in 1903 and the minimum 4.2% in 1912, but in any case, it was always inferior to their proportion in the working population, as was the case for their proportion in unions (See appendix 4.7). When comparing the average proportion of women in strikes between 1893 and 1903 with the average proportion between 1904 and 1914, a general decrease is visible, with the average being 13.9% during the first period and 8.92% during the second period. It must be borne in mind that this decrease occurred in parallel with an increase in women's union membership. In 1900, the proportion of women in unions was 6.28% and their proportion in strikes 13.1%, as opposed to respectively 8.70% and 8.8% in 1914. The fact that both proportions were almost equal in 1914 could be read as a sign that, by this date, women's pattern of labour participation was on the way to being reversed; they progressively favoured union membership to the detriment of strikes as a means to protect their interests as workers. Yet, this could be interpreted as the direct result of their original greater involvement in strikes; the more they got involved, the more they showed their capacity for resistance, therefore the more they came to be seen as worth the attention and acceptance of trade unions. In addition, the more they came to be accepted in unions, the less they considered striking as the only way to express their discontent, so the less they went on strike. Yet, when compared with their proportion in the working population, their low participation rate both in unions and in strikes indicates that they still did not regard either unions or strikes as a form of expression to the same extent as men did.

In the tobacco industry, the number of women strikers amounted to 28 574 between 1893 and 1914, that is to say an average of 1 299 female strikers per year and 520 per strike. Their proportion in relation to the total number of strikers varied from 0% in 1903 to 100% in 1910, 1911 and 1912, with an average of 90.44% over the period (See appendix 4.8). This average more or less corresponded to their proportion in the industry and unions. Therefore, quantitatively speaking, female tobacco workers were exceptional in terms of participation in strikes, in the same way as they were in terms of participation in unions.

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[10] Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, pp. 204-206.

This was not the case in the hat industry where the total number of female strikers did not go beyond 3 096, that is to say an average of 141 per year and 23 per strike. Their proportion remained much lower, with a maximum of 52.69% in 1902 and a minimum of 0% in 1897, 1898 and 1899, thus averaging 31.85% (See appendix 4.9). This proportion was much lower than their proportion in the working population and higher than their proportion in unions, which corresponded to the general trend mentioned earlier. So, in this respect, female hatters were no exception. Yet, annual averages did not take into account the fact that male strikes were quite common in this industry. In 1901, for instance, while the general proportion of women in strikes was 32.71%, this proportion reached 64.86% in mixed strikes.

Such a difference makes it important to examine mixed and female strikes in more detail. 25 mixed (48%) and 21 female (40%) strikes occurred between 1893 and 1914 in the tobacco industry, as opposed to respectively 48 (36%) and 11 (8.2%) in the hat industry. So, in both cases, mixed strikes tended to be more common than female strikes, but they were much rarer in the hat industry. Women also tended to get more involved in mixed strikes as opposed to female strikes (See appendices 4.10 and 4.11), but the proportion of women in mixed strikes varied considerably between the two industries, with an average of 89.2% for the tobacco industry and of 43.2% in the hat industry. Yet, this proportion could vary from one year to another. In the tobacco industry, only one strike where women were in the minority was recorded in Orléans in January 1908, with one woman out of 28 workers. In the hat industry, this proportion passed from 11.1% in Paris in January 1913 to 82.35% in Lille in December 1910. Out of 45 mixed strikes between 1895 and 1914, seven had between 10% and 19% of women, five had between 20% and 29%, eight between 30% and 39%, four between 40% and 49%, 11 between 50% and 59% and 10 60% or more[11]. Such figures reveal that on several occasions female hatters outnumbered men in strikes, as was the case in Épernon in March 1901, in Paris in January 1902 and January 1903, and Chazelles-sur-Lyon in February 1912. In 1901, 1902, 1905, 1912 and 1913, female hatters were actually in the majority in mixed strikes. Furthermore, when they got involved their proportion remained much higher than the national average, which shows that even if their participation remained low when compared to tobacco workers, they tended to be more involved than the majority of their counterparts in other industries.

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[11] These proportions have been established according to the Statistiques des grèves, op. cit., 1895-1914.

In terms of size, mixed strikes tended to involve more strikers than male and female strikes in both industries (See appendix 4.12). Female strikes remained generally small, both in terms of workers involved and in terms of their proportion in the workforce. In the tobacco industry, the two female strikes that occurred in 1899 for instance included only 147 female workers as opposed to 2 847 for the three mixed strikes. In 1901, the female strike in Marseilles involved only 120 women, as opposed to the mixed one in Dieppe that involved 515 workers, including 511 women. In 1905, four female strikes took place, averaging 159 women per strike, which corresponded to only 11.80% of the total workforce in the factories concerned, whereas the two mixed strikes involved 50.1% of the workforce. In 1908, two female strikes averaged only 48.5 female per strike, that is to say only 7.74% of the workforce working in the two factories. The two female strikes that occurred in 1910 in Orléans included respectively 33 and 26 women out of 430 workers, that is to say an average of only 6.86% of the workforce. The two occurring in Lille and Morlaix in 1911 represented only 10.6% of the workforce, the one in Riom in February 1912 only 7.93%[12].

To a lesser extent, the same situation was to be found in the hat industry, as confirmed by numerous examples. For instance, three strikes occurred in 1895; two male and one female. The first two averaged 20.5 workers, that is to say 43.61% of the workers employed, whereas the female strike included only 16 females, that is to say only 17.64% of the workers. As a whole, out of nine female strikes between 1895 and 1914[13], five included 20% or less of the workforce, two between 21% and 49%, one between 50% and 79% and one above 80%[14].

The above figures show that female strikes occurred mainly on a small workshop basis, as opposed to the mixed strikes which took place on a factory basis. Such a result is not surprising in the sense that it corresponds to the gender divisions of work in both industries. In this connection, Madeleine Guilbert has shown that the period of major agitation in the labour movement corresponded, generally speaking, with an increase in the number of women in

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[12] The same could be said about male strikes. According to the Statistiques des grèves, the first one reported was in Orléans in September 1903. It involved only 19 mechanics, which corresponded to the low proportion of men in the industry and the low proportion of mechanics. Another one occurred in Le Mans in March 1904 and involved only 23 male workers from the same workshop. Three other strikes took place in 1905; in Nantes in July, involving 31 men; in Châteauroux in August, involving 65 men, and in Le Mans in September, involving 10 men. They averaged only 35 men per strike. The one which took place in Orléans in October 1906 involved only nine men.

[13] The one occurring in Le Bugue in July-August 1909 could not be taken into account considering that the number of workers usually employed in the factory was not reported in the Statistiques des grèves .

[14] According to the Statistiques des grèves, in Châlon-sur- Saône in June 1896, the female strike involved 58.33% of the workforce. The one in Limoges in March 1906 was composed of 90.32% of the workforce.

strikes. This would confirm what was previously said about the influence of mass movements on female participation; the more strikers, the more female strikers. Yet, the proportion of women involved in strikes during these periods tended to be lower than in period of relative calm[15]. In other words, there were relatively more women in small strikes than in big strikes, as if they felt less comfortable in movements involving a large amount of strikers or referring to general concerns. This was confirmed to a certain extent in the tobacco industry in the sense that the peak years in terms of number of strikers was accompanied by a peak in women's participation and that the three years during which their proportion reached 100% (1910, 1911 and 1912) were part of the five years with the lowest number of strikers, with respectively 59, 159 and 50 strikers. Thus, female tobacco workers, although ready to show solidarity in time of labour agitation, like in 1902, tended to concentrate their striking energy in small strikes related to particular needs. This supports the evidence that female strikes tended to be much smaller than mixed strikes.

In the hat industry however the greater number of women in strikes were not necessarily to be found in years when the number of strikers reached its peak and the four highest proportion of women corresponded to years during which the number of strikers averaged 300 or more (See appendices 4.11 and 4.12). These results would suggest that female hatters were not necessarily dependent upon a general trend and that they were not always keen to show solidarity for matters of general concern. At the same time, they had not yet reached the level of independence necessary to strike on their own or for issues related to their own needs. This is supported by the fact that female strikes tended to be much rarer than mixed strikes in this industry.

Although female strikes tended to be smaller, therefore more particularistic, in both industries, the above information has shown some differences in female tobacco workers' and hatters' striking patterns. It now seems appropriate to examine the main factors that could have generated such differences. It could be argued that in the case of the hat industry, women's general low participation corresponded to the traditional image of women, docile and submissive, as opposed to aggressive and attacking. However, the example of tobacco workers proves, once again, that such an assumption is too simplistic to be accepted as a pertinent explanation. This is why it is necessary to take other elements into account .

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[15] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 207.

First of all, it is important to consider the risk factor. When considering the outcome of many strikes, it could be said that it was much more risky for hatters to go on strike than for tobacco workers. The first risk was the threat of suspension or dismissal. In the 1892 workers' national congress, female cigar makers were taken as an example to show that workers employed by the government could not demonstrate as easily as the others because they would be suspended[16]. Such a practice was seen, for instance, in Nancy in March 1914, when three women were suspended for eight days because of their behaviour during a demonstration[17]. Yet, as a whole, short suspensions constituted the worst that could happen to a tobacco worker who decided to go on strike and it would be unfair to say that this prevented them from striking to the same extent as the other workers, all the more so when considering what happened to numerous hatters who, instead of being suspended, lost their job permanently. Many examples of hatters being sacked were found. In Digne in 1892, for instance, all the strikers had to leave the locality to find work elsewhere after a three month strike[18]. In Albi in July 1895, twenty strikers were immediately replaced and only five of them were re-employed after the strike[19]. In Nogent-le-Rotrou in July 1898, 19 workers were sacked[20]. This rather common practice was regarded by a good number of employers as a way of getting rid of trade unionists, if not unions. This is why, in most cases, the strikers would be progressively replaced by non-trade unionists[21].

Lock-outs were another strategy used by hatters' employers to dispose of local unions and their unwilling workforce in several cases. In Saint Symphorien in 1900, Mr Pinay closed his factory, after his workforce had complained about its pay rates, and recruited new workers a few days later. In total, eight male and 14 female workers, all members of the local union,

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[16] Cinquième congrès national des syndicats et groupes corporatifs ouvriers de France, tenu à Marseille du 19 au 22 octobre 1892. Compte rendu receuilli dans les archives de la Bourse du travail de Marseille, Paris, Marcel Rivière, 1909, p. 71.

[17] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, op. cit., 1914, pp. 40-43.

[18] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, op. cit., 1892, p. 39.
For other examples, see:
Statistique des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1900, p. 135 (Paris).
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1906, p. 235 (Lyons).
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1912, pp. 128-131 (Mantes).
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1913, pp. 160-163 (Belfort).

[19] Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1895, p. 59.
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1899, p. 109.

[20] Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1898, p. 63.

[21] See for instance:
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1896, p. 84.
Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1914, pp. 92-95.

were not re-employed. The women were replaced by young apprentices who got paid below the tariff[22].

Yet, the most famous case of lock-outs remains the one in Châlabre which occurred between October 1900 and January 1901. The six factories of the locality originally employed 400 men and women. The female workers of one of them came to ask for a pay increase. By way of a response, their employer, Mr Garrouste, decided to close his workshops and sacked 42 men and 60 women. He then re-opened his doors with a workforce composed of 38 male and 24 female non unionised workers and imposed new regulations on the female workers. The rumour that the other five employers would take this opportunity to do exactly the same in order to put an end to the local union progressively spread in the village. The workers asked their employers to promise that they would not do so, but after the employers' refusal, 100 workers, including 50 women went on strike[23]. Their only claim was the recognition of the union.

Being sacked or victimised was not a risk only women ran when they went on strike. However, as observed by Madeleine Guilbert, because they were less qualified, they were also more easily replaced, and therefore more likely to be sacked[24]. So, in a way, the risk of dismissal was greater for them. This concern seems to have been particularly common amongst female hatters, as attested in 1896, when the leader of the federation tried to persuade the female garnishers working in Toulouse to join the strike that was occurring in this locality by using the argument that they would not be easily replaced. As hats could not be finished without them, this would stop production and put pressure on the employer. As this was likely to lead to a successful outcome, the female workers decided to join the strike. Then, their employer promised them that they could re-enter the factory at any time without any consequence, but they refused, claiming that this was entirely dependent upon their male fellow workers being re-admitted under the same conditions[25]. Such an example shows that the pressure that could be put on women by employers in order to break a strike was not always effective. Yet, this employers' strategy worked in several cases. In 1893, after a few months of strike in Chazelles, the manager, Mr Provost, decided to involve his wife who tried to persuade the female garnishers to resume work[26]. She invited them at her place in order to put

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[22]Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, 1900, pp. 460-461.
[23] Ibid., pp. 536.
[24] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 225.
[25] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 6 September 1896, p. 2.
[26] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 17 June 1894, p. 2

pressure on them and discuss ways of putting an end to the strike[27]. Most of the garnishers accepted the invitation[28]. Mr Provost' plan worked to some extent since 17 garnishers, out of 180, and 30 apprentices resumed work, with the police as an escort, the following day[29]. The same could be said about the June 1895 strike in Albi. The garnishers of the Vitrac factory left the workshops to complain about their pay rates and were consequently sacked. The following day, the employer asked them to come back with a further decrease in the tariff and they accepted, thinking that a little was better than nothing[30].

As shown by Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, in addition to putting pressure on workers' right to work, some employers would not hesitate to sack a whole family if only one of the member took part in a strike[31]. In some cases, women were directly targeted and used as a means of putting pressure on other members of their family. Such practice was seen in the hat industry during the 1900 strike in Châlabre, when the manager threatened to sack the male fullers working for him if they were in any way related to the striking garnishers[32].

The extra pressure put on women could also come from their role as women or from members of their own family. The accepted view was that women, on whom lay the pressure of feeding the children and family, were particularly concerned with subsistence matters, all the more so because strike allowances were lower than for men, both in general and in the two industries under scrutiny. In addition, because blackmailing was often used by employers, it was not uncommon for men to prevent their wives or daughters from getting involved[33]. It must also be envisaged that women's family status had a role to play in their involvement in strikes. For instance, 43 women were named in a list of 97 people who failed to support strikes occurring in 1903 and 1904 in the hat industry. Out of these 43, 31 were married and two left the strikers at the same time as their husband[34]. Without saying that husbands' decisions always determined their wives', the above example could indicate that the presence of family members in the same workshop or business influenced female hatters' involvement in strikes. No example of this kind was found in the tobacco industry.

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[27] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 8 April 1894, p. 2.
[28] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 17 June 1894, p. 2.
[29] Ibid.
[30] *"Grève des ouvriers fouleurs d'Albi"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 25 August 1895, p. 4.
[31] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, Femmes et féminisme dans le mouvement ouvrier français, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières, 1981, p. 127.
[32] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 17 June 1894, p. 2.
[33] Marie-Hélène Zylberberg-Hocquard, op. cit., p. 127.
[34] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 May 1904, p. 4.

The way federations perceived the use of strikes was another factor which could have played a great role in determining workers', and in particular women's, involvement in and familiarity with strikes. In this connection, tobacco workers seem to have been well aware of the difficulty they could meet in organising strikes. In 1892, Mr Fournier, from the Lyons union, pointed out for instance:

> *"Si nous n'aimons pas entendre ce vilain mot de grève, c'est que nous sommes payés pour la craindre (...) Avons-nous un état, nous employés de l'État, qui nous permette de vivre dans d'autres ateliers? Si nous nous mettons en grève, nous perdrons certainement des sympathies acquises."*[35]

Two elements were thus crucial. Firstly, the fact that they were workers with particular skills prevented them from finding work easily elsewhere. Secondly, the fact that they were state workers prevented them from taking the risk of going against what was expected from them. Yet, one may wonder to what extent these reasons were justified and sincere, all the more so when considering the following points. It is interesting to note that Fournier used the fact that tobacco workers were skilled as a deterrent to striking, whereas hatters used this argument as a good reason to encourage women to get involved in strikes. Furthermore, being skilled state workers did not prevent female workers from striking when need be. In fact, tobacco workers created a *"caisse de réserve"* to finance strikes as early as 1897. This *caisse* was reinforced in 1899 by an extra subscription called "*le sou de grève*" imposed on any member. In 1901, the *"sou de grève"* amounted 0.15F per day for men against 0.10F for women for the duration of strikes[36].

Before going on strike, federate workers were supposed to get the consent of the local union and warn the federation which was responsible for trying to solve the conflict. The strike was supposed to be declared only when the federation had failed to negotiate an agreement[37] or consented to it with the agreement of the local union. According to the Statistiques des grèves, negotiations were led at least once by the federation and at least 9 times by the local unions between 1893 and 1914. Yet, disagreement could occur between the federation and local unions, as was the case in Le Mans in July 1904 when fifty female workers from the hydraulic packaging workshop went on strike, claiming that the tobacco was too dry, which made the packaging too difficult. They asked for a pay increase or an improvement in the quality of the tobacco. On 28th July, the union voted that all the workers would go on strike if

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[35] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, Paris, 1893, p. 13.
[36] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 317.
[37] Office du travail, Les Associations ouvrières, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, p. 624.

these fifty did not gain satisfaction[38]. The management promised them that an inspector would be sent to the factory to examine their case. The federation then got involved and asked the workers to resume work so that they could be in their workshops when the inspector was present. If the workers did not get what they wanted, the union would then be free to decide to go on strike or not[39]. Yet, the union opposed this decision, claiming that this would undermine their chance of success. Their claim was eventually accepted and they resumed work on 11th August[40].

Despite these disagreements, it can be said that, as a whole, strikes in the tobacco industry were closely monitored by unions, which gave a moral as well as financial support to women who formed the majority. Given that a union was present in all the factories where a strike occurred and that the majority of female workers belonged to a union, women going on strike were therefore almost guaranteed to get financial support from their union, which could facilitate their involvement in strikes.

In the hat industry, the strike was used as the last resort and in certain conditions. According to the statutes published with the 1912 congress report, the federation was to avoid the use of strikes and encourage discussion between employers and workers in order to reach a peaceful agreement (Art. 16). Spontaneous strikes were to be used only in case of a pay decrease without previous warning. Otherwise, all strikes would be declared only after the local union's consent (Art. 17)[41]. According to the Statistiques des grèves, negotiations were led by the federation at least in one case, in Paris between December 1901 and January 1902, and by the local union in at least 12 cases. Strikers received money from their union or the federation in at least 22 strikes. A union was to be found in at least 114 factories or workshops, out of 133, where a strike occurred[42]. So, in this industry too, unionisation and labour agitation were closely related. Trade unionists were not the only ones to go on strike, but non-trade unionists would meet comparatively more financial pressure. As only a minority of women belonged to a union, they were less likely to get financial support to sustain a strike. Consequently, it was relatively even more risky for them.

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[38] L'Humanité, 29 July 1904, p. 3.
[39] L'Humanité, 1 August 1904, p. 3.
[40] L'Humanité, 12 August 1904, p. 3.
[41] Fédération des syndicats ouvriers de la chapellerie française, *"Statut"*, Quinzième congrès national, tenu à Bort, du 22 au 27 juillet 1912, Paris, Imprimerie La Productrice, 1913, p. 28.
[42] The presence of a union was not always indicated in the Statistiques des grèves.

Another factor to consider is the way the use and usefulness of women in strikes was perceived. It could be expected for instance that women were less likely to get involved if their involvement was regarded as a burden or a source of ridicule. The fact that tobacco workers' strikes were dominated by women made these women the centre of particular attention. They were often used as an example to be followed not only by women, but also by men and the rest of the working class. Here is, for instance, what could be read in La Voix du peuple about the general strike in 1902:

> *"Les ouvriers des tabacs, les femmes, viennent de donner aux hommes un exemple de solidarité et de vaillance. Souhaitons que les "mâles" se piquent d'émulation et marchent sur les traces des ouvrières des tabacs (...) Jamais encore une corporation n'avait donné un exemple aussi unanime de solidarité ouvrière (...) Ainsi voilà ce que peuvent l'énergie et la virilité. Cette victoire si complète est l'oeuvre de femmes, et non d'électeurs!"*[43]

The oppositions between *"mâles"* and *"virilité"* and between *"électeurs"* and *"femmes"* indicate why these female workers were particularly worth being admired. By striking, not only were they doing what men were expected to do, but they were also expressing their discontent in a form which was more risky than a vote. As they were deprived of the right to vote, their only resort to improve their situation was striking, and by doing so, they proved that they were capable of greater courage than men.

Female hatters' involvement was also viewed with a positive eye on various occasions. Thus, during the 1898 hatters' congress, when the time to discuss the strike in Nogent-le-Rotrou came, it was decided that the local union should try to encourage the female garnishers to join the union because their participation would give strength to the movement and would certainly lead to the success of the strike[44]. In some cases, women were even seen as a good means of dissuading defection. As expressed in the following advice given to female strikers during the Chazelles strike in 1894, the fact that women were less expected to strike than men could contribute to denigrate non-strikers:

> *"Et vous, Mmes les garnisseuses, quand vous les [les renégats briseurs de grève] tiendrez , tapez fort, car à chaque claque vous y joindrez le ridicule et le mépris, et c'est tout ce qu'ils méritent."*[45]

In October 1894, L'Ouvrier chapelier published an article entitled *"La grève et les femmes"* which developed this idea that the success or failure of strikes was dependent upon women. The best way for a man to know if his wife loved him was during a strike in the sense that, if

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[43] Jean Pénat, *"Victoire de femmes"*, La Voix du peuple, 15 June 1902, p. 1.
[44] Société générale des chapeliers de France, Dixième congrès national, tenu à Givors, du 15 au 20 juillet 1898, Carmaux, Imprimerie des Travailleurs Réunis, 1898, p. 22.
[45] A Desmurs, *"Enfin!"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 28 January 1894, p. 2.

she loved and trusted him, she would be ready to cope with the situation, but if she did not, she would make his life a misery. The article ended in these terms:

> *"L'agitation ouvrière de l'avenir repose sur la sympathie de la femme (...), dans son consentement à porter la croix commune (...) Une agitation ouvrière vivace ne sera possible qu'avec le concours de la femme."*[46]

Although this article referred to the indirect support of women as wives rather than as workers, other articles mentioned the fact that some strikes had succeeded especially thanks to the direct involvement and courage of female workers. The latter were sometimes presented as being exemplary:

> *"Il nous faudrait des femmes comme à Espéraza qui ne craignent pas d'affronter la lutte avec cette énergie qui nous caractérise dans le Midi, des femmes qui ne craignent pas de se coucher dans la boue quand il le faut pour arrêter la force meurtrière (...) lancée contre les travailleurs."*[47]

L'Ouvrier chapelier in particular gave numerous examples of action led by women in strikes, even abroad[48] or from other trades[49]. The combination of employers' and family pressures made their participation admirable to many commentators, such as Pierre Milan, who came to describe the commitment of women in the Châlabre strike in 1900 in these terms:

> *"Cette grève (...) nous a permis d'admirer le spectacle réconfortant de l'ouvrière gréviste insufflant elle même au mari, au père, au fils, au frère, au fiancé, à l'ami, au camarade, l'énergie virile de la résistance (...) Ces ouvrières admirables qui (...) malgré les mauvais traitements de parents indignes, malgré la pression patronale alliée en la circonstance à la despotique autorité patriarcale, conjugale et familiale, malgré les injures, les menaces, les coups, malgré tout enfin, sont tous les jours plus ardentes au combat."*[50]

Such a statement makes it necessary to say a few words on the expressions usually used to comment on women involvement in strikes. The use of *"énergie virile"* to describe women's deeds must be pointed out, as if submission and acceptance were traditionally female attributes and resistance a male one. Furthermore, women were presented in relation to males, as if their commitment in strikes made sense only if they were to be connected to a husband, a father, a son, a brother, a fiancé or a male friend. As a whole, most of the comments on female strikers were given in favourable terms. The words or expressions *"courage"*, *"énergie"*, *"esprit de*

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[46] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 7 October 1894, p. 3.
[47] AN F7 13 880, *"Grèves chapellerie, 1910: notes, presse"*.
[48] See for instance:
"Grève des ouvrières italiennes", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 31 May 1896, p. 2.
L'Ouvrier chapelier, 20 July 1890, p. 3.
"Mouvement ouvrier international", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 17 August 1890, p. 3.
"Détails de la grève de Danbury, États Unis", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 28 January 1894, p. 3.
[49] *"Grève des ouvrières en amande d'Aix"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 27 August 1893, p. 1.
[50] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 December 1900, p. 1.

solidarité" and *"attitude admirable"* were found on many occasions[51]. Yet, one may wonder to what extent the recurrent use of them did not reveal people's, and even the writers', own prejudices, the prejudices in this case being the belief that women were less courageous, less energetic and showed less solidarity than men. Admiration is often linked to wonder and rapture, to something superior, so if women's attitude in particular was regarded as admirable, this is precisely because they did not comply with the norm, to the common belief; they were admirable because ab-normal and exceptional.

After considering the way women strikers were perceived, it is now time to examine, once again , the other side of the story, that is to say how women perceived strikes and themselves as strikers. In the tobacco industry, the general impression is that women were the first, if not the only ones, to support the idea of striking. They often presented strikes as their favourite way of expressing their discontent, most of the time to the benefit of their self confidence and sometimes to the detriment of the credibility and efficiency of unions. As shown by Caroline Milhaud at the time, this created some kind of gender division between females who would get involved in strikes and males who would get involved in debates:

> *"Bien qu'il soit difficile de dire la part qui revient à l'homme et celle qui appartient à la femme dans cette collaboration, il est certain qu'ils ont tous deux leur part de mérite à l'oeuvre commune. Les femmes ont surtout donné l'exemple de la résistance pendant les grèves tandis que les hommes défendaient les intérêts communs dans les congrès."*[52]

Such a statement could easily support the view that women had different patterns of militancy and labour activity. Marie Marmo Mullaney for instance has already suggested that in militant situations *"the feminine personality tends to be involved with concrete feelings, things, and people rather than with abstract entities; it tends towards personalism and particularism"*[53]. Strikes corresponded exactly to these "concrete things", whereas congresses reflected "abstract entities", so, in this respect, tobacco workers were no exception. This was confirmed

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[51] See in particular:
"Moulins", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 13 April 1890, p. 2.
"Grève de Dignes", L'ouvrier chapelier, 19 June 1892, p. 2.
"A Chazelles", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 8 April 1894, p. 1.
"Toulouse", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 14 June 1896, p. 2.
"Châlabre debout", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 November 1900, p. 1.
"Bilan de 1900", L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 January 1901, p. 1.
L'Ouvrier chapelier, 1 June 1903, p. 3.
AN F7 13 881, *"Le conflit de la chapellerie parisienne"*, La Bataille syndicaliste, 10 October 1913.

[52] Caroline Milhaud, L'Ouvrière en France, Paris, F. Alcan, 1902, p. 100.

[53] Marie Marmo Mullaney, *"Gender and the Socialist Revolutionary Role, 1871-1921: A General Theory of the Female Revolutionary Personality"*, Historical Reflexions/ Réflexions Historiques, 11 (2), 1984, p. 135.

by the attitude of some tobacco workers, those in Lyons for instance. During the 1906 congress, Mr Fournier, the Lyons delegate, mentioned the case of the cigar makers who wanted to go on strike to obtain a pay increase. When he asked them to wait till the end of the congress to see if the latter would obtain anything for them, he was answered:

> *"Vous êtes allés au congrès aussi l'année dernière et nous ne sommes pas plus avancées, nous ne pouvons pas vivre de notre travail."*[54]

This situation came to create some tension between male and female militants, as well as a misunderstanding between what males thought of the relationship between women and strikes and what women actually thought of strikes. Thus, during the 1892 congress when Mme Deleuil expressed the wish to create a *"caisse de résistance"*, Lamberti from Tonneins asked her: *"De résistance... à quoi?"*. When she answered: *"Contre toute sorte d'accidents ... une grève"*, Lamberti exclaimed: *"Nous y voilà!"* [55]. In the 1893 workers' national congress, during the discussion on the general strike, the male delegate for the tobacco workers' federation, P. Ducros, expressed his doubts about the possibility of a general strike in a federation with a majority of women[56]. This would support *Citoyen* Maraton's criticism of some female workers in Châteauroux who once insulted their husbands and accused them of being lazy for striking[57]. Yet, female tobacco workers were far from being all hesitant before the idea of striking. Thus, during the 1908 congress, Mme Niestle declared in the name of the Dijon section that female workers were ready to use any means, even extreme ones, to get their demands related to retirement[58]. Even the vision of a general strike does not seem to have scared all of them, as attested by Mme Sarzier, for instance, who showed on various occasions her enthusiasm for this means of action to obtain the eight-hour working day[59]. During the 1899 congress, she made it clear that female workers were not at all opposed to the adoption of the general strike when she addressed *Citoyen* Schuh, who did not want to commit himself, in these terms:

> *"Il est regrettable que ce soit des femmes qui seront obligées de vous montrer le chemin et de vous mener au combat; vous manquez de courage, c'est mal, ou alors vous n'êtes pas convaincu."*[60]

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[54] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1906, p. 7.
[55] Deuxième congrès de la fédération nationale des ouvriers et ouvrières des manufactures de tabacs, Paris, du 6 au 11 décembre 1892, op. cit., p. 143.
[56] Compte rendu du congrès national des chambres syndicales et groupes corporatifs ouvriers, tenu à Paris en juillet 1893, Paris, Imprimerie Jean Allemane, no date, p. 18.
[57] L'Écho des tabacs, December 1903, p. 6.
[58] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1908, p. 6.
[59] L'Écho des tabacs, October 1903, p. 7.
L'Écho des tabacs, January 1905, pp. 7- 8.
[60] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1899, p. 2.

This is one of the reasons why female tobacco workers came to develop some pride in regarding as normal something which was generally considered as uncommon, if not exceptional, by society as a whole and by the rest of the working class, all the more so because women could not be dissociated from motherhood and child breeding. Some female members of the federation came to praise these female strikers for their courage in going against prejudices and what was traditionally expected from them. Thus, *Citoyenne* Jacoby commented on the 1902 general strike in the following terms:

> *"C'était la première grève générale d'une corporation et par des mères (...) En haut lieu on se disait secrètement: jamais ces femmes ne quitteront l'atelier pour pouvoir donner la bouchée de pain aux petits qui viennent derrière (...) Ils comptaient sans l'énergie de ces braves travailleuses qui se disent: si nous souffrons aujourd'hui, ce sera pour nos descendants (...) Nous ne sommes pas des égoïstes et plaçons au dessus de tout l'intérêt général de la corporation."*[61]

Yet, by putting in parallel the two terms *descendants* and *corporation*, Jacoby puts, probably unconsciously, some limit to these workers' unselfishness in the sense that striking for the well being of future workers also meant protecting and assuring the future of their offspring. Such a comment could indicate that the recruitment system and the fact that tobacco workers expected their children to have priority over other workers had a role to play in the high participation of women tobacco workers in strikes. In a way, this would also indicate that their traditional role as mothers determined their action and commitment in strikes. This supports what was previously said about their commitment in unions: their militancy and labour activity was pre-determined by their womanhood and motherhood, and even if they could be regarded as exceptional as militants and strikers, their ultimate goals were not that far off what society expected from women.

In this connection, the analysis of their claims appears to be a good way of assessing what women actually expected from strikes. Although in general they rarely took the excuse of a strike to call into question their oppression as women, Madeleine Guilbert has shown that the claims expressed in female strikes differed from those expressed in mixed or male strikes[62]. Strikes against pay decreases and fines or those related to the sacking of workers, supervisors and managers were to be found mostly in female strikes, whereas male or mixed strikes were much more anti-authority and offensive. So, female strikes tended to be more defensive, which suggests that, as a whole, women were much more exploited and exposed to abuse.

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[61] L'Écho des tabacs, November 1902, p. 3.
[62] Madeleine Guilbert, op. cit., p. 224.

In the tobacco industry, when considering all the strikes, the top five claims were in decreasing order as follows: pay increase (30%), solidarity with tobacco workers from other factories (26.2%), against work regulations and punishments (12.5%), against the bad quality of raw material (10%) and for the reintegration of expelled or suspended workers (7.5%). However, when considering only mixed strikes, the first claim was solidarity with other tobacco workers, the second and third being for the reintegration of workers and against work regulations. In contrast, women on their own went on strike mostly for pay increases and against the bad quality of tobacco and work regulations. These respective orders show a difference in claims depending on whether women were striking on their own or not; in mixed strikes, they tended to be more concerned with issues related to solidarity amongst workers; on their own, they were mostly concerned with issues directly related to the improvement of their personal situation, especially in terms of wages. This confirms that women were put under financial pressure and that they were more likely to be concerned with particular matters rather than matters of general interest (See appendix 4.13).

The top five claims differed slightly in the hat industry, with pay increase being first (37%), the re-integration of workers second (14.1%), against pay decrease third (13.5%), regulations fourth (10%) and for the sacking of workers fifth (7.6%) (See appendix 4.14). These different claims, orders and percentages indicate that the wage issue was greater in the hat industry, not only in the sense that 37%, as opposed to 30%, of the claims were to demand more money, but also that striking against pay decrease was rather common, while it was almost unseen in the tobacco industry, with only two cases found between 1893 and 1914 according to the Statistiques des grèves. Issues related to wages were in fact the only reasons why female hatters went on strike on their own[63]. The fact that the demand for the re-integration of workers came second indicates that hatters had probably more reasons to make such a demand, which would therefore confirms that they were more likely to be suspended or expelled than tobacco workers. In addition, the fact that the sacking of workers came amongst the top claims shows that the competition between workers was a greater issue amongst hatters than amongst tobacco workers. So, as a whole, it could be said that the differences in claims between the two industries were more the results of differences in the characteristics of these industries than that of the difference in the presence of women in strikes. As seen, women in both industries were mostly concerned with the same issues, that is to say wages,

[63] This goes against the idea that female workers got lower wages because they never complained about them. See p. 29.

which goes along with the fact that they were put under financial pressure, but also puts, once again, some limit to the exceptional characteristics of female tobacco workers.

Yet, there are other claims that need particular attention in respect of the participation of female tobacco workers in strikes, namely those related to the respect of their dignity. As expressed in the first chapter of this study, tobacco workers were particularly concerned with this, both in their private life and at work. Their argument was clear and simple:

> *"[Elles] ne peuvent souffrir d'être insultées, ni laisser s'immiscer dans leur vie privée ceux qui ne sont leurs supérieurs que par le travail."*[64]

In other words, hierarchy had to respect them as women as well as respect the distinction between the public and the private spheres. This is why they did not hesitate to strike when they felt that these issues were at stake. At least two strikes were directly related to this between 1893 and 1914.

On 12th February 1895 in Dijon, the manager of the factory made an unpleasant comment on the private life of one of the female workers, Mme Koenig, at a meeting with union delegates . This caused great concern among workers, all the more so because Mme Koenig was the oldest worker of the factory and was known as being a honest person. As a protest, 350 workers decided to go on strike to demand the transfer of the manager. The following day, Mme Koenig's neighbours bore witness to her *"parfaite honorabilité, tant au point de vue des bonnes moeurs que de l'honnêteté et des relations de bon voisinage"*[65]. The union leader also sent references from Mme Koenig's previous employers to the *préfet*. A general inspector was sent to the factory to make an enquiry, while the federation tried to reach an agreement with the Central Management and the *Ministre*. In the meantime, the strike went on:

> *"Nous ne rentrerons dans nos ateliers comme de braves gens que nous sommes qu'après que celui qui nous a injuriées- dans ce que nous avons de plus cher au monde- aura lui-même quitté sa place."*[66]

Yet, work was resumed on 27th, after the *Ministre* had declared that their dignity would be respected and promised that an enquiry would be undertaken. Following the enquiry report, the manager was put to early retirement straight away[67].

The strike which had happened in April 1899 in Nantes had left the workers somewhat bitter towards the management. On 21st November, at a meeting between the union and the manager about the transfer of one of the supervisors, the manager used the following saying: *"A chacun*

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[64] L'Écho des tabacs, March 1897, p. 2.
[65] Marie-Victoire Louis, Le Droit de cuissage, Paris, Éditions de l'Atelier, 1994, p. 262.
[66] Ibid., p. 263.
[67] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 428.

son métier, les vaches seront bien gardées". One of the female workers apparently answered him: *"Et bien Monsieur, les vaches partiront et les taureaux les suivront"*[68]. The delegates left the room immediately and recounted the incident to the others who decided to go on strike to protest. The following day, a delegation went to see the *préfet* to ask for the manager to be expelled. On 29th and 30th , some turbulent demonstrations took place in front of the factory. The workers were joined by other unions and the demonstration spread to the whole city. On 3rd December, a chief engineer wrote a report in which he stated that the manager had never had any intention of insulting them and guaranteed that nothing would be done against the workers who had decided to join the strike. Workers agreed to resume work the following day. Yet, the next time the manager came to visit the workshops, the workers accused him of being a coward and asked for his dismissal[69]. The vice-president of the union even exclaimed: *"Qu'il se rende par ici! J'ai mes ciseaux et je ferai un malheur"*[70]. The chief engineer then realised that the manager could no longer work in the factory in these conditions and the latter was transferred a few months later[71]. During the 1900 congress, this strike was approved by Mme Fraxe who made it clear that a manager, considering his education, should not use insulting words, all the more so because workers, who were far less educated, were reprimanded if they used such words[72]. To her, it was a matter of respect and fairness[73].

The year 1902 added another perspective to their quest for respectability. It was crucial in the sense that it put an end, once and for all, to institutional favouritism, at least in principle, in tobacco factories. In April, 711 cigar makers went on strike in Reuilly to support three old workers who had been replaced by young ones and put on a less lucrative job. This was viewed by the other workers as an act of injustice and disrespect towards promotion according to the length of service. It was for the same reason that some 13 198 workers, including 90% of women, joined a successful general strike in May and June. The success of such a strike meant a lot for women in particular in the sense that it was a way of limiting, if not suppressing, the possibility for supervisors or managers to favour those who had the nicest face and abuse of their power against women. This was considered as a victory against sexual harassment in the workplace, and the fact that this victory was achieved by women was worth

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[68] AN BB18 2118[1]/ 601 A99, Le Populaire de Nantes, 26 November 1899.
[69] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1900, p. 1.
[70] AN BB18 2118[1]/601A99, *"Grève de la manufacture des tabacs de Nantes"*, Nouvelliste de Nantes, 7 December 1899.
[71] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 430.
[72] L'Écho des tabacs, January 1900, p. 1.
[73] For further details on this strike see:
Marie-Victoire Louis, op. cit., pp. 261-265.

particular attention. The recognition of the length of service as the only means for promotion was also to them one of the best ways of having both their ability as workers and dignity as women respected and acknowledged.

For any worker, the point of making a claim is to express discontent and to believe that its cause will be suppressed. Nobody would go on strike without the slight hope of success. This is why it seems as important to study the outcome of strikes as it is to examine their cause and the claims on which they were based. In the tobacco industry, 38.1% of the strikes for which the outcome was known ended up with a compromise between the workers and the managers, as opposed to about 31% which ended in a success and 27.2% in a failure (See appendix 4.15). These proportions were respectively 23.8%, 30.6% and 44.2% in the hat industry (See appendix 4.16). Orders were therefore reversed. Although tobacco workers and hatters had as much chance of complete success, hatters were much more likely to fail completely or partially. This did not prevent them from striking more often that tobacco workers, but this could have some consequence on the female rate of involvement in the sense that women would have been more likely to get more involved if their chance of success had been greater. In other words, the high rate of failures in this industry could be regarded as one factor to explain the lower participation of women in strikes compared to tobacco workers. This is supported by the fact that mixed and female strikes were much less likely to succeed than male strikes in the hat industry, whereas male strikes were much more likely to fail than mixed and female strikes in the tobacco industry (See appendices 4.17 and 4.18). So, it could be said that female tobacco workers got more involved because they were more likely to have their claims accepted.

It has been said that women in the hat industry went on strike on their own only for issues related to their wages. It is worth noting that when they asked for a pay increase their success rate reached 33.33%, as opposed to 28.57% for male strikes and 18.2% for mixed strikes. They were thus more likely to get an increase than men. The same could be said about the tobacco industry (See appendix 4.19). Yet, female hatters always failed when they tried to strike against a pay decrease. Attacking was therefore their best defence.

In terms of the duration of strikes, the latter tended to be much longer in the hat industry (over 18 days) than in the tobacco industry (over 5 days). The longest were the mixed ones in both cases, but it is interesting to note that female ones were longer than male ones in the tobacco

industry, as if women were more stubborn to secure their success or had more means to sustain a strike than men. In contrast, female strikes were much shorter than male ones in the hat industry. This illustrates the difficulty women on their own met in sustaining a strike and supports the evidence that they were put under more pressure than men (See appendix 4.20) .

Women in strikes

It is important to complement women's attitudes to strikes with their attitudes in strikes. Some aspects have already been suggested in the course on this chapter, but this section is to give more detail on female strikers' behaviour and examine all their main characteristics.

Like any event, strikes had first of all a beginning. The first question to be answered is therefore: who started them in the two industries under scrutiny? As might be expected, most of the male strikes and female strikes were respectively started by men and women, but what about mixed strikes? In the tobacco industry, some strikes directly involved the majority of workers, like the one in the Dijon tobacco factory in January 1895. However, most of the time, the strikes were started by women and other workers, both men and women, progressively joined the movement. In February 1897 in Marseilles, for instance, the 40 women who had started the strike to ask for a pay increase were joined by 80 men and 340 other women from other workshops on the last day of the strike as an act of solidarity. The same could be said about the strike in Nantes in August 1898: 150 cigar makers went on strike and the other workers joined them, including 58 men and 660 women[74]. In Le Mans in July-August 1904, the strike was started by the female workers from the packaging workshop but they were supported by an additional 422 workers a week later. In Dieppe, in October 1904, 60 cigar makers were eventually followed by 300 workers[75]. Other examples could be mentioned, but the idea is clear: tobacco workers, and women in particular, did not hesitate to support some of their colleagues even when they were not directly concerned with the claims. In some cases this support was based on one or a handful of individuals, which shows that solidarity could sometimes be really strong. Thus, in October 1912, all the Tonneins ninas cigar makers went on strike to support three female workers who had been punished after refusing to give their cigars because of the bad quality of the tobacco[76]. In Nancy in July 1913, the workers stopped working and went down into the court yard to demonstrate in support of

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[74] Statistiques des grèves, 1898, pp. 16-19.
[75] Statistiques des grèves, 1904, pp. 80-83
[76] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, 1912"*.

a worker who had been threatened with dismissal[77]. On one occasion, a strike was organised in favour of one single woman. In Dieppe in 1901, the vice-president of the union was suspended for two days after making a mistake in her work. She complained about it, claiming that she had been punished because of her role in the union. As her suspension was maintained, she managed to convince 350 workers to go on strike for the duration of her suspension[78].

The same acts of solidarity were found in the hat industry. A good number of strikes were actually started by women. In August 1896 in Nogent-le-Rotrou, 42 female garnishers from the Girard factory refused to carry on working, asking for the suppression of a workshop established in town under the responsibility of the wife of one of the supervisors and accusing the latter of bringing home the best hats. The workers left the factory and went to their employer's house to give him the list of their claims. As the boss was not home, they went to the station and waited for him. They did the same the following morning. When the manager eventually came back, he refused to consider their claims. As a result, in the afternoon, a hundred workers, both male and female, left the factory to show solidarity with the garnishers. The strike eventually succeeded and no incident was reported[79]. In December 1900, 300 hatters from Paris, including 200 women, went on strike to demand a pay increase. The fact that this strike had been initiated by some women made it a good example to be set for the whole labour movement, as attested in La Voix du peuple:

> *"Il est bon de rappeler que ce sont les femmes qui eurent l'initiative de cette grève. Les vaillantes camarades n'ont donc qu'à se féliciter de leur énergie et à souhaiter que dans toutes les corporations les hommes fassent preuve d'autant de tempérament."*[80]

It must be noted that in some cases, men on their own supported some female workers who had started the strike, even when their claims did not concern them personally. Thus, in 1911 in Grenoble, 20 men joined the 20 female workers, just as an act of solidarity[81]. In 1905 in Fontenay-le-Comte, 148 female workers went on strike and were soon followed by some males from the same factory[82]. In Mantes in 1912, some garnishers asked for a pay increase, the dismissal of a supervisor and the re-integration of two female workers who had been

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[77] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, 1913"*.
[78] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 434.
[79] AN F12 4 679, *"Eure et Loire, 1896: rapports des lieutenants Durcan et Dureau"*.
[80] *"Les chapeliers de Paris"*, La Voix du peuple, 26 January 1902, p. 3.
[81] office du travail, Statistiques des grèves, op. cit., 1911, pp. 152-155.
[82] L'Humanité, 27 January 1905, p. 3.

expelled. They were progressively followed by the men of the factory, but the strike was a failure[83].

Several cases of strikes organised in favour of one or two individuals were also found in the hat industry. In Guéret in January 1896, an employer had advised a drunken worker to go home. At the end of the working day, all the workers of this workshop, including 17 men and 15 women, gave a letter to their employer threatening to cease work if the worker was not re-integrated. No incident occurred and the worker was allowed to resume work[84]. In Paris in June-July 1906, 32 cap makers, including 10 women, went on strike for a female worker to be re-integrated in the workshop. In Mantes in March 1912, 55 strikers, including 25 women, demanded for two women workers to be re-employed. In Paris in November 1913-January 1914, a mixed strike was started for the re-integration of a female worker. In November 1914, in the Frézet factory in Paris, three female workers were asked to leave the factory after arriving late. One of them refused and managed to get into the workshop to plead her cause amongst the other workers. She made such a fuss that Mr. Frézet called the police who took her to the police station. All the workers ceased work immediately as an act of solidarity[85].

Most of the above examples show cases of partial mixed strikes, therefore partial solidarity. Yet, to go a bit further in the analysis of the notion of solidarity, it seems important to consider the existence of general strikes. General strikes themselves could be divided into two categories: those including the majority of workers on a national scale and those including the majority in one particular factory or locality. No national strike ever occurred in the hat industry. In the tobacco industry, the question of the general strike was first put on the agenda at the 1898 congress. The vote in favour of it was renewed in 1899 and 1900[86], which allowed workers to put it in practice no more than two years later in May and June 1902. In total, 77.29% of the tobacco workers, including 11 871 women, went on strike. This successful strike was started in Paris after a delegation had been sent in vain to the Central Manager and to the *Ministre des finances* who had decided to withdraw the system of promotion according to the length of service even in the factories where it was already applied[87]. The strike progressively spread to provincial factories. Lille in particular was

[83] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves, op. cit., 1912, pp. 128-131.

[84] AN F12 4 679, *"Département Creuse, 1896: Guéret le 7 janvier 1896, lettre du Préfet de la Creuse au Ministre du commerce et de l'industrie"*.

[85] AN F7 13 741, *"Notes 1914, Lettre du 13 novembre 1913 du préfet de police sur la grève d'ouvriers et d'ouvrières de la maison Frézet, manufacture de châpeaux, Paris"*.

[86] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., pp. 373-374.

[87] For further information on this general strike see: Sandra Salin, *"Des femmes dans la lancée: la grève générale des ouvrières de la manufacture des tabacs de Lyon"*, Cahiers d'Histoire Sociale (Rhône-Alpes),

reluctant to get involved, but eventually even the factories who already benefited from this mode of promotion joined the movement. However, they did it unequally and the participation rate greatly differed from one factory to another. Even those who were the first to strike were not necessarily those where the movement had the greatest impact: 100% in Lyons and Le Havre; over 90% in Le Gros Caillou, Pantin, Morlaix, Bordeaux, and Châteauroux, between 70% and 90% in Reuilly, Toulouse, Dijon, Nancy, Limoges, Lille and Riom; and below 40% in Dieppe (37.8%) and Orléans (23.7%).

General strikes in the same factory or locality occurred in both industries. In the tobacco industry, a few strikes included more than 95% of the workforce; in Bordeaux in October 1899 (97.54%), Nantes in November-December 1899 (98.94%), Nancy in May 1906 (96.6%) and Nantes in March-April 1907 . In addition to Lyons and Le Havre in 1902, five general strikes took place: in Châteauroux in October 1900 and March 1904, in Bordeaux in November 1907, in Le Havre and Nancy in March 1914.

In the hat industry, a good number of strikes included more than 90% of the workforce like in Paris between November 1902 and January 1903 (92.59%), in Limoges in March 1906[88] (90.32%), in Espéraza between January and September 1910 (99%), in Paris between May and June 1912 (96.2%), in Mantes in March 1912 (91.6%), in Paris between May and June 1912 (91,6%) and between November 1912 and January 1913 (91.1%). Furthermore, no less than 30 local, general strikes occurred between 1893 and 1914[89]. Out of these 30, 12 were male and 18 mixed. These 18 included 651 female workers out of 1 543 strikers, that is to say 42.19%.

The fact that solidarity went beyond the corporation in the tobacco industry is worth particular attention. Thus, in 1902 in Orléans, 70 workers, including 60 women and representing 21% of the workforce, went on strike only to support the Pantin match makers' strike. In addition,

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Lyon, Institut Régional CGT d'Histoire Sociale, May 1996, pp. 47.51.

[88] It must be noted that this strike was a female one.

[89] According to the Statistiques des grèves, the 30 local general strikes in the hat industry occurred in Annecy in October-November 1895; in Bourganeuf in January 1896; in Chambon-sur-Voueize in July-October 1896; in Paris in February 1900; in Châlabre in October 1900; in Paris in March 1902; in Le Puy in December 1902; in Paris between December 1902 and February 1903; in Fontenay-le-Comte between January and February 1905; in Paris in May 1906; in Lille in June 1906; in Lyons in March 1906; in Lyons from June to September 1906; in Paris from February to March 1907; in Quillan in July-August 1908; in Couiza in December 1909; in Paris in June 1910; in Paris in May-July 1911; in Grenoble in September 1911; in Bellegarde in November and December 1911; in Paris in May 1912; in Chazelles-sur-Lyon in February 1912; in Paris in June 1912 and July 1912; in Essonnes in July-August 1912; in Paris in January 1913; in Paris in July-August 1913; in Paris in July 1913, between November 1913 and January 1914 and between February and March 1914.

tobacco workers' involvement in May days was part of their routine, as attested by various sources. In 1906 in Châteauroux for instance, the tobacco factory decided to go and celebrate the 1st May. The police were called despite the fact that two days before a delegation had been sent to the manager to warn him that the workers would not work but that there would not be any incident and that those who did not want to strike would be free to enter the factory[90]. In 1906 and 1907 all the tobacco factories celebrated the event[91]. In 1909, most of them remained closed, as was the case in the following years. It must be noted that the tobacco workers often constituted the vast majority, sometimes the total number, of the workers who did not work that day in the departments where a factory was to be found, as was the case in 1909, 1910[92], 1912[93] and 1914[94]. According to police reports and letters that *préfets* sent to the *Ministre de l'Intérieur* in 1912 and 1914, it appears that tobacco workers would take advantage of that day to present a list of claims to the *Ministre des finances* and attend meetings organised by their unions or local union centres. They rarely took this opportunity to demonstrate and no incident was ever reported.

Despite all the above examples of class and gender solidarity, it would be misleading to say that all the strikes were approved by all the workers. Not joining a strike did not necessarily mean disapproval, but in some cases, it did, and when it did, this caused various incidents on many occasions, especially in the tobacco industry. In September 1908 in Lille, 200 of the cigar makers went on strike and tried to prevent the non-strikers from working by organising demonstrations in front of the factory. One female non-striker in particular who was severely insulted had to take refuge in a tram under the protection of the police who had been called[95]. Even the 1902 general strike met strong opposition from certain workers. In Nantes for instance, some workers, both men and women, carried on working or went back to work as early as 3rd June. This was due to a disagreement between the two local unions: one voted in favour of the strike and one voted against. The yellow union refused to get involved and to attend meetings organised by the red union[96]. This created serious tensions resulting in some

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[90] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1906, p. 2.
[91] L'Écho des tabacs, June 1907, p. 1.
[92] AN F7 13 268, *"Manifestations du Premier mai 1909-10"*.
[93] AN F7 13 269, *"Manifestations du Premier mai 1911-12: 1912"*.
[94] AN F7 13 271, *"Manifestation du Premier mai 1914"*.
[95] AN F7 13 817, *"Dans une manufacture de tabacs"*, Le Petit parisien, 18 September 1908.
AN F7 13 817, *"La tyrannie syndicale"*, L'Éclair, 17 September 1908.
[96] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 4 June 1902, p. 3.

incidents, although not serious ones: on 5th June, the strikers waited for the non-strikers and shouted at them in front of the factory[97].

Although of a different kind, examples of a lack of solidarity were also found in the hat industry. Some strikes were actually started as an opposition to women workers, as was the case in Nogent-le-Rotrou in August 1896 when a mixed strike, including 78 women out of 198 strikers, was declared because the workers wanted the closure of a women apprentices workshop which had been opened outside the factory[98]. In Paris in January-March 1906, 62 male cap makers went on strike against the introduction of machines manipulated by women. Union membership could make the difference in some cases, as shown in Louviers in August 1904 when a mixed strike was started by 44 workers, including 13 women, who wanted a female non-unionised worker to be expelled. In addition, a clash between genders was seen in Belfort in June 1913: 50 male workers out of 56 went on strike following the sacking of two of their colleagues, but female workers kept working[99].

This last example shows a lack of solidarity and courage which makes the bravery of some women even more worth detailing. Comments on the courage of certain women in strikes have already been given in the course of this chapter, but a difference must be made between comments and actual deeds, especially because comments were often used in a strategic way and insisted more on the fact that these deeds were performed by women than on the deeds themselves which reflected a pre-determined, patronising view on these deeds. Yet, female workers proved to be truly worthy of admiration on many occasions, especially when considering the fact that they could not be dissociated from their family responsibilities and had to take these issues into consideration at any time during a strike.

The best example to illustrate this is the series of events that took place during the hatters' strike in Espéraza in 1910. As mentioned before, women's courage was praised when, on 14th January, some two to three hundred of them lay on the road to prevent the carts full of finished hats from leaving the factory[100]. As a whole, as a consequence of the numerous demonstrations, interventions of the police and arrests that were organised during the strike,

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[97] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des ouvriers des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 6 June 1902, p. 3.

[98] This was the reason given by the *Préfet* and published in the Statistiques des grèves. Yet, as seen previously, the reason given in police reports in regards to this strike differed. This example indicates that the information given about a strike could vary according to sources and that, therefore, the latter must be regarded more as providers of indications and tendencies rather than the truth.

[99] AN F7 13 881, *"Grèves chapeliers, 1911: Belfort"*.

[100] AN F7 13 880, *"Grèves habillement, 1909-1910: Fabriques, divers, grèves 1911-13-14. Le Rréfet de l'Aude, 15 janvier 1910"*.

two women, out of 11 people accused, were sentenced: Melle Raynaud was given a 24 hour suspended sentence and Melle Guiraud a 48 hour one[101].

The female strikers were reminded of the fact that they were also, if not first of all, mothers on various occasions. Following a lack of resources, the strikers' children exodus started on 24th February. They were sent to family and friends in the surrounding towns and villages[102]. This event was described as being strongly felt by women in particular. L'Ouvrier chapelier reported that during a demonstration, the army got involved and charged the strikers, among whom several women. Some of them were portrayed shouting *"Où est mon petit garçon, où est ma petite fille?"*, while the paper made a point in specifying that amongst the three people who had been injured and taken to hospital was Marie Béziat who was pregnant[103]. Such a description shows that even when striking, women had to put up with their situation as mothers or mothers to be and with the danger and risk that this could involve.

Pressure of any kind was also extremely high during this strike. L'Ouvrier chapelier mentioned the case of a young female whose father, a strike-breaker, tried to force her to resume work. She refused and after struggling for seven months against her boss and family, she had to escape to Toulouse[104]. In fact, soliciting and blackmailing was quite common during this strike, as attested on many occasions in Le Midi socialiste and L'Humanité, but women were described as the best to resist[105]. For instance, the police were sent to the home of a family whose head had just died and whose two daughters were strikers. The police tried to persuade the latter to resume work but were thrown out[106]. The strikers, and women with them, had also to face the non-strikers and their attacks[107]. Female strikers were regularly insulted[108] and some of them were even attacked with scissors[109].

As a whole, the example of Espéraza shows that women were more vulnerable because they were also, in most cases, mothers. Yet, this also made them more admirable, all the more so because they had to combine their concern for their children and family with financial pressure, blackmail and insults of all sorts, let alone arrests and physical injuries.

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[101] Only these two women received short punishments. Men got from six day to six month sentences. L'Écho des tabacs, July-August 1910, p. 4.

[102] *"La grève d'Espéraza au jour le jour"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, July-August 1910, p. 3.

[103] For further detail, see: *"La vérité sur la grève d'Espéraza"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, June-July 1910, pp. 1-2

[104] *"Ce qui attend les traitres"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, February-March 1911, p. 3.

[105] AN F7 13 880, *"Grèves chapellerie, 1910: notes, presse"*.

[106] AN F7 13 880, *"Par raison d'État"*, L'Humanité, 1March 1910.

[107] AN F7 13 880, Le Midi socialiste, 27 February 1910.

[108] AN F7 13 880, Le Midi socialiste, 9 February 1910.

[109] AN F7 13 880, Le Midi socialiste, 31 January 1910.

Espéraza was an interesting case for another reason. As expressed in the previous chapters, women's lack of education was often regarded as a cause for their lack of involvement in unions and in the labour movement in general. Yet, the following example is to show that a lack of education in the proper sense did not necessarily prevent women from expressing themselves in words when they felt the need for it or had the opportunity to do so. In 1914, a group of female hatters wrote a letter to the *Ministre* Briand to complain about the attitude of the police during the strike. The spelling and syntax of their letter, more than the content itself, justifies the reproduction of the following extract:

> *"Nous avons de la troupe des gendarmes qui ne font rien ils s'étonne de voir une grève si calme. si ses injustices se passaient ailleurs je ne sait comment sa finirais."*[110]

This example would suggest that women's lack of involvement in federative papers for instance had other causes in addition to their inability to write properly. The above women did not hesitate to write to the *Ministre* himself to express their discontent, so one may wonder why so few articles written by women appeared in L'Ouvrier chapelier. These women probably thought it more useful to write directly to a member of the government rather that filling a few lines in the federative paper. It could therefore be argued that federative papers were not to them a way of obtaining concrete results. As their greater involvement in strikes, as opposed to unions and debates, shows, words were to be used to reach a particular, concrete target, not to express ideas and theories.

The above argument is particularly relevant when examining the attitude of women in demonstrations too. The case of Espéraza has shown that demonstrations were used by hatters as a form of protest and accompaniment of strikes. In fact, demonstrations were used in both industries but were particularly common, if not systematic, in the tobacco industry. During the 1899 congress, when the discussion on punishments took place, Mme Sarzier advised the audience in these terms:

> *"Protestez donc partout, descendez dans la cour comme nous et vous verrez que vous supprimerez toutes ces punitions arbitraires."*[111]

Female tobacco workers seem to have been ready and particularly keen to demonstrate every time they wanted to obtain something in the shortest time, which caused discontent on the male side on various occasions. Men in Limoges came to criticise this typically female attitude as follows:

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[110] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, presse, 1914"*.
[111] L'Écho des tabacs, April 1899, p. 4.

> *"A Limoges, nous n'avons que des hommes et nous sommes un peu moins bouillants que les femmes; mais enfin, il est quelquefois nécessaire de faire entendre à ces camarades femmes qu'il y a danger évident à suivre cette voie d'emportement sans réflexion."*[112]

The same kind of criticism could be found in 1912, when Duménil wrote:

> *"A moins que dans chaque section, les mères de famille détournent un peu du courage qu'elles ont à se surmener pour protester, non pas par de bruyantes et inutiles manifestations, mais en fournissant à leurs organisations locales les données nécessaires pour discuter."*[113]

Demonstrations were not always used as a form of protest. On one occasion it was used to celebrate a happy event. In July 1914, when the Senate voted the *semaine anglaise*, 200 female workers from the Dijon factory marched from the factory to the local trade union centre in celebration of the good news. They then went back to the factory and resumed work *"dans le plus grand calme"*[114].

However, women's attitude, when demonstrating to express their discontent, could be turbulent and passionate. The use of songs was rather common. The *Internationale* and the *Carmagnole* were regularly sung, as during the 1905 strike in Nancy[115]. During the strike at Le Gros Caillou in 1897, the manager threatened the workers that he would go and get the police if the workers did not go back to work. He was immediately surrounded by women who started to sing *"Peut-être bien qu'il n'est pas mort..."*. Lelorrain was there to attest that the manager *"n'en menait pas large"*[116].

During a demonstration which occurred in front of the factory on 5th June 1902 in Tonneins the dissidents were attacked by the strikers, especially women, with eggs. They then handed a flag on which could be read *"Vive la grève, à bas les traîtres"*. The day after, women used whistles[117].

The best example found however was the demonstration organised by women during the 1910 strike in Bordeaux. It was described as follows:

> *"Massées sous les fenêtres du cabinet de leur directeur, au nombre de plusieurs centaines, les unes criaient "Démission, Démission! Hou! Hou!"; d'autres sifflaient à l'aide de sifflets à roulette. Puis toutes chantaient la Carmagnole, L'Internationale, L'Ave Marie Stella, et une autre chanson disant notamment "Notre directeur est malade, il lui faut un médecin, nous lui porterons des mauves, pour le faire ch... demain" (...) Certaines dansaient en*

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[112] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1910, p. 27.
[113] L'Écho des tabacs, September 1912, p. 1.
[114] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, notes, 1914"*.
[115] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1905, p. 1.
AN BB18 2293[1] 230 A05, *"Lettre du procureur général à Mr. le Garde des Sceaux, Nancy, le 4 mars 1905"*.
[116] L'Écho des tabacs, February 1897, p. 4.
[117] Le Progrès, 7 June 1902, p. 2.

chantant et ce charivari intolérable s'entendait à deux cents mètres au moins de la place Rodesse."[118]

Violence was used in some cases. Thus in Nancy in March 1914, some of the strikers broke some windows and pieces of furniture inside the factory[119]. Yet, as a whole, verbal abuse was the most common form of violence and remained relatively rare. In fact, despite the above examples, most of the demonstrations and strikes were non-threatening. This was particularly true in the case of the 1902 general strike which was described as being calm most of the time. Workers entering or leaving the factory were often accompanied with shouts of abuse and insults from the strikers, but as a whole no serious incidents were ever reported[120]. In Toulouse, for instance, the strikers asked for the police to be present at the start and finish of the auxiliaries' work to avoid any trouble[121].

This non-threatening attitude was partly explained by the fact that tobacco workers were anxious not to upset the local community and officials in order to make them allies rather than enemies. This is why, for instance, they commonly asked for the support of local papers, like Le Progrès during the 1902 general strike in Lyons, and local politicians. In Toulouse in 1902, the workers invited the Haute Garonne *député* to join the other *députés* to support their claims[122]. A delegation went to see the *préfet*, accompanied by the manager of the factory. In Riom, the president and the secretary of the local union had a meeting with the *sous-préfet*, a meeting in which they let him know that the workers of the Riom factory intended to go on strike to support the Paris factories. They also made it clear that if they joined the movement, it was only to support the Parisian strikers, but personally they had nothing against their local manager. They also pledged themselves to keep the *préfet* informed of the evolution of the strike and not to resort to violence[124]. In Orléans in 1910, the female strikers asked the *maire* and *Député* Fernand Rabier to intervene on their behalf in the conflict[125].

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[118] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, 1910, Préfecture de la Gironde, Bordeaux le 19 décembre 1910".*
[119] AN 7 13 817, *"Tabacs, notes, 1914".*
[120] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des ouvriers des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 5 June 1902, p. 3.
[121] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des ouvriers des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 6 June 1902, p. 3.
[122] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 4 June 1902, p. 3.
[123] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail; la grève des ouvriers des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 6 June 1902, p. 3.
[124] Archives départementales du Puy-de-Dôme, 10M59: *"Grève: lettre du Sous-préfet de Riom à Monsieur le Préfet du Puy-de-Dôme, 27 octobre 1900".*
[125] AN BB18 2431 366 A10, *"Lettre du procureur général à Mr le Garde des Sceaux, Orléans le 15 septembre 1910".*

Sometimes, such practice led to the negotiations being led by politicians instead of unions, especially when the Central Management refused to communicate with their representatives. Thus, in January 1900 in Lille, the workers went on strike to complain about the quality of the tobacco they had to manipulate. They then asked the local *député* as well as the general and town councillors to intervene and lead an enquiry on the quality of tobacco and the working conditions in the factory. The management refused to allow the officials to get involved because they were also asking for a worker to be included in the meeting which was supposed to take place. The *maire* and the *députés* then went to Paris in order to see the *Ministre des finances*[126]. During the 1902 general strike, about 20 *députés* and delegates of the federation went to see the General Manager. The delegation also went to see the *Ministre* but the latter refused to meet the federation delegates who were eventually received separately in the afternoon[127].

This lack of cordiality from managers was not to be regarded as typical in so far as, in most cases, workers would try to make sure that their relationship remained respectful, if not friendly. During the 1899 Bordeaux strike, for instance, although all the workers were on strike, they promised the management to take care of the night watch to prevent any risk of fire in the factory[128]. During the 1902 general strike, the workers in Toulouse organised an auxiliary service, in collaboration with the management, to make sure that production would not be completely stopped[129]. In Lyons, the workers declared the strike only after asking and obtaining the manager's permission[130]. The latter accepted, provided that the workers would finish the work in progress before leaving the factory[131]. In May 1904, during the strike in Nantes, Mr. Merlou, *the sous-secrétaire d'État aux finances,* went to visit the factory to hold a meeting with the management and another one with the strikers[132].

Appeals to officials were also used by hatters, but to a lesser extent. Legally speaking, workers from private industries could ask for the support of *préfets* to negotiate with employers if they wanted or needed to. Thus, in August 1896 in Nogent-le-Rotrou, the female workers had a

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[126] Charles Mannheim, op. cit, pp. 431-433.
[127] Le Progrès, 7 June 1902, p. 2.
[128] A. Demos, *"Grève des cigarières de Bordeaux"*, Le Journal du peuple, 27 October 1899, p. 2.
[129] Marie Bonnevial, *"Tribune du travail: la grève des manufactures de tabacs"*, La Fronde, 4 June 1902, p. 3.
[130] Archives départementales du Rhône, 10Mp C21, *"Grèves, mises à l'index et incidents divers. Rapports 1902: Rapport, commissariat de Perrache, le 31 mai 1902".*
[131] Archives départementales du Rhône, 10Mp C21, *"Grèves, mises à l'index et incidents divers. Rapports 1902: Lyon le 31 mai 1902, lettre du commissariat de police à Mr. le secrétaire général".*
[132] *"Les travailleurs des tabacs de Nantes"*, L'Humanité, 7 May 1904, p. 3.

meeting with the *sous-préfet* who advised them, in vain, to go back to work. They left him, promising to hold another meeting at the *sous-préfecture* the following morning[133]. However, according to the Statistiques des grèves, hatters used this conciliation process only on six occasions over the period. This shows that negotiations were mostly led between workers, or unions, and employers.

The high proportion of peaceful strikes and appeals to officials on tobacco workers' behalf would indicate that their strikes tended to be directed by wisdom rather than spontaneity. Yet, this was not always the case and they sometimes came to be criticised for rushing instead of thinking and asking for advice. The best example is what happened in Châteauroux in 1900. In early October, a cigar maker was transferred from one workshop to another as the consequence of a mistake she had made in her work. This resulted in a pay decrease for her. A delegation was sent to the manager to complain about this matter, but the manager refused to change his mind and the workers decided to go on strike immediately. Two days later the *Ministre* agreed to put the worker in another workshop and the work was consequently resumed the following day. The workers were personally congratulated by the *maire* for their victory. However, during the discussions with the manager, the delegates had also complained about the way rejects were checked. In order to satisfy their claim, the manager decided to introduce a new system. Convinced that there was a catch, the workers refused the new system and went on another strike at the end of December. They came to the workshop but spent their time doing small sewing jobs. The following day, the *Ministre* decided to let them choose which system they wanted to adopt. The workers resumed work at the beginning of January, having chosen to apply the old system, which was exactly the system against which they had started the strike[134].

This kind of spontaneous attitude sometimes led to disagreement between local unions and workers, but as a whole only a few cases of strikes not supported by unions were found. In August 1911 some of the workers of the Morlaix factory launched a strike, but they resumed work in the afternoon because the union disapproved of their decision[135]. In Nancy in 1914, Mme Charron, the ex-leader of the union, accused the female workers of the factory of

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[133] AN F12 4 679, *"Eure et Loire, 1896: rapports des lieutenants Durcan et Dureau"*.
[134] Charles Mannheim, op. cit., p. 434.
[135] AN F7 13 817, *"Tabacs, 1911, Quimper, le 26 août 1911, Préfet de l'Intérieur"*.

striking without the union's approval. She advised them that instead of stopping work, they should have presented their claims to the management to discuss them[136].

Such criticism is to be related to the relationship between unions and female strikers. According to the Statistiques des grèves, a positive correlation existed between the presence of a union and the occurrence of mixed as well as female strikes in the tobacco industry. Yet, the above examples indicate that strikers were not necessarily supported by unions. In turn, it must be envisaged that strikers did not necessarily support unions or did not necessarily belong to a union. This was particularly relevant in the case of the hat industry in the sense that some mixed and female strikes occurred without the presence of a union (See appendix 4.21). As for female strikes only, however, a trend toward perfect correlation could be noticed; from 1893 to 1906, the majority of female strikes (5 out of 4) occurred without the presence of a union, whereas from 1906 onwards, female strikes and unions went together. So, it could be argued that women progressively related their movement to unionisation, which would correspond to the fact that female hatters' general proportion in unions progressively increased. This argument is also supported by the fact that, in several cases, female hatters took the opportunity of a strike to form or join a union. Thus, in November 1893 in Marseilles, the hundred female workers of the Gionale factory went on strike to complain about a decrease in piece rate. They decided to form a union to put an end to these constant decreases[137]. In Toulouse in 1896, women eventually joined the strike[138], got unionised and became members of the federation[139]. Women also took the opportunity of a strike to join the local union in Chambon-sur-Voueize between July and October 1896[140]. The same could be said about Nogent-le-Rotrou: in August 1896, on the last day of the strike, 120 workers joined the 78 women who had initiated the strike and they all formed a union[141]. In Saint Symphorien sur Coise, the strikers formed a union in October 1900 and joined the federation[142]. In Espéraza in 1910, after the first day of the strike, the female workers decided to form their own union and join the demonstration organised for the following day[143]. In Chazelles-sur-Lyon in February 1912, 40 female workers who were not yet unionised joined

[136] AN F7 13 909, *"Tabacs, 1910, 1912, 1914: Nancy, le 26 mars 1914, lettre du commissaire de police"*.
[137] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 20 November 1893, p. 2.
[138] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 14 June 1896, pp 1-2.
[139] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 28 June 1896, p. 2.
[140] L'Ouvrier chapelier, 26 July 1896, p. 2.
[141] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves, op. cit., 1896, p. 83.
[142] Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves, op. cit., 1900, p. 139.
[143] AN F7 13 880, Le Midi socialiste, 10 October 1909.

the strike which had been initiated by the male workers and eventually became members of the local union[144].

Yet, one must not forget that for most women at that time, strikes were mainly a means to obtain immediate results. This is why it was not uncommon for them to join a union during a strike and then drop it once the strike was finished and they had obtained what they wanted. This led to regular criticism from male trade unionists and militants. Once Émile Pouget wrote in La Guerre sociale:

> *"Il ne suffit pas de se réjouir de la constitution d'un syndicat de femmes, il faut qu'elles y restent. Or, combien de syndicats d'ouvrières n'ont été qu'un déjeuner au soleil? Certes, en des périodes d'engouement, d'emballement (...) on a vu des femmes rallier en foule le syndicat, faire grève avec ardeur et passion. Et puis? Une fois le travail repris (...) qu'est devenu le syndicat? Les premières semaines il a été cahin-caha. Les plus tenaces des militantes ont continué à venir aux réunions qu'avaient déjà délaissées le gros de l'armée. Puis l'indifférence et la lassitude ont eu raison de leur fougue si bien que, quelques mois après, le pauvre syndicat n'était plus qu'un squelette."*[145]

The study of the union membership before and after strikes would indicate to what extent this was applicable to the industries under scrutiny. Considering the irregularity of the data given in the Annuaires des syndicats, such an evaluation was possible only in certain cases after 1900. In the tobacco industry, the fact that women were in the majority, and remained in it throughout the period, makes this evaluation less relevant. However, it can be said that the effect of the 1902 general strike was twofold. In some cases, some divergence occurred, like in Lyons, and memberships consequently dropped. In other cases, it had some beneficial effects, like in Nice. Only 329 women out of 811 workers took part in the strike. Yet, the female members passed from 347 women at the beginning of 1902 to 614 at the beginning of the following year.

As for the hat industry, out of 27 mixed strikes which involved more than 40% of women between 1894 and 1914, 12 occurred in Paris. It is therefore interesting to compare the evolution of the main Paris union with the number of women in strikes between 1900 and 1914. In 1900, the union included only three women. Between 1902 and 1903, the female membership passed from 20 to 500 women, which corresponded to a greater involvement of women in strikes; the number of female strikers in Paris rose from none in 1900 to 200 and 346 in 1901 and 1902. It must be noted that out of five mixed strikes during these two years, two were successful and three ended up in a compromise. It could therefore be argued that the

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[144] L'Ouvrier chapelier, March 1912, p. 2.

[145] E. Pouget., *"Pour syndiquer les femmes"*, La Guerre sociale, 24 April 1912, p. 2.

absence of failure encouraged women to join unions. The number of female in unions remained steady between 1903 and 1911, with the figures varying between 500 and 600. This again corresponded to an absence of women in strikes. In 1912, female membership rose to 1 150 and remained this high till 1914. This was accompanied by the second wave of female participation in strikes (See appendix 4.22). A correlation can therefore be made between the number of women and their number in strikes. Yet, in this instance, periods of calm were not followed by a drop in women's membership, which casts doubts on Pouget's comments.

The case of Chazelles-sur-Lyon is slightly different. In 1901, the rise in the number of women strikers was accompanied by an increase in their membership which passed from 25 to 62. It remained steady during the following year, but started to decrease from 1902 onwards, which corresponded to a period of calm. It then increased and dropped again. A second strike occurred in 1912, in which women were part of the majority. The success of the strike was followed by a rise in their membership, which carried up increasing till 1914 (See appendix 4.23). Whereas the first strike had been followed by a drop, the second one did not.

This example would suggest that Pouget was not entirely wrong. In fact, the evolution of other unions would confirm that he was generally right, at least with regard to the hat industry. In Fontenay-le-Comte, the 1905 strike and rise in women's membership was followed by a drop. After this date, the number of women never increased again, which corresponded to a period of calm on the strike front (See appendix 4.24). The August 1896 strike in Nogent-le-Rotrou was a success followed by the creation of a union. In January 1897, 50 workers went on strike and, once again, the strike was successful. But, no other strikes were recorded till 1914 and the union ceased to appear in the Annuaires des syndicats after 1897. The same could be said about the union formed in Saint-Symphorien-sur-Coise after a successful strike. The union contained 89 members, including 11 women, but after 1900, no additional strikes were reported in this locality and according to the Annuaires des syndicats, the union ceased to exist after 1903. Finally, the same happened in Mantes. In March 1912, 55 workers including 25 women went on strike. That year the union contained 24 members including four women, but the strike was a failure: 50 workers were expelled for good and the union never appeared in the Annuaires des syndicats again.

As a whole, a correlation could be noticed between the number of women in strikes, successes and their number in unions. Women hatters were therefore more likely to join unions in order to obtain what they wanted and then give up their membership once they had been satisfied.

Yet, exceptions were found. The presence of such exceptions could be regarded as the confirmation of the rule or the indication that the rule was not entirely appropriate. In any case, their interpretation would be purely subjective, but evidence suggests and confirms that women tended to be more concerned with immediate action and results than union militancy.

This concern was probably also related to the role women were actually given in strikes. Just a few words can be said about this since the matter was rarely commented on or described. This does not mean that they did not take any responsibilities, but at least these responsibilities were worth less attention in commentators' minds. In union meetings, they tended to be mainly present, if present at all, amongst the audience. But they sometimes got actively involved.

In the tobacco industry, Mme Louis, from Lyons, assisted the president of the federate union at most of the meetings organised during the 1902 general strike[146]. Women sometimes took part in the debates and conversations, like Mme Barthélémy from the yellow union, *L'Émancipation*, or Mme Louis and Melle Chaize from the federate union[147]. Mme Louis also belonged to the delegation sent to the *maire* and the editors of the papers Le Progrès and Le Lyon républicain [148]. Mme Charron from the Nancy union was included in the delegation sent to the *Ministre* on 6 June 1902[149]. She and Mme Filleux from Pantin also assisted a meeting organised on 9 June in Paris[150]. Mme Jacoby and Melle Germont were included in a delegation responsible for writing a report on promotion according to length of service in the factories to be submitted to the *Ministre* so that he could reach a decision[151]. Mme Jacoby was also delegated by the Central Committee to lead the 1905 Nancy strike, with the support of the secretary of the Nancy *Fédération des syndicats*[152].

Female hatters were also given some responsibilities, although limited and often secondary as was the case in the tobacco industry. A woman, Mme Ernest Moseiller was included in the board of a meeting organised in Paris during the strike in January 1902. Two days later, another woman, Mme Millet, assisted another meeting in which women were said to be

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[146] Archives départementales du Rhône, 10Mp C21, *"Grèves, mises à l'index et incidents divers, rapports 1902: Commissaire spécial, rapport du 4 juin 1902".*
[147] Le Progrès, 7 June 1902, p. 3.
[148] Archives départementales du Rhône, 10Mp C21, *"Grèves, mises à l'index et incidents* divers, *rapports 1902: rapport du Commissaire spécial du 5 juin 1902".*
[149] Le Progrès, 7 June 1902, p. 3.
[150] Le Progrès, 10 June 1902, p. 1.
[151] L'Écho des tabacs, July 1902, p. 2.
[152] AN BB18 2293[1] 230 A05: *"Lettre de procureur général à Mr. le Garde des Sceuax, Nancy, le 4 mars 1905".*

numerous[153]. An imbalance between their role and the number of women present was also noticed during a meeting organised by the Paris union during the 1913 strike; Mme Muller was chosen as an assistant when half of the audience composed of more that 400 people was female. The strike committee was elected and included only one woman out of eight members[154]. Only one example of a woman chairing a session was found; on 18 February 1910 in Espéraza, Jeanne Reynier chaired the union meeting in a cellar[155].

The above examples, and their number, make a striking contrast with the amount of comments made on women's attitudes during strikes. They were talked about when they were visible, admirable, noisy, courageous or too spontaneous, but the way they actually organised themselves and the responsibilities they took were kept untold, as if these issues were none of their concern, as if they were not there to support the backbone of any strike. The same imbalance was noticed when studying their role in unions. So, one may finally wonder to what extent sources did not perpetuate the idea that organisation and responsibilities were not part of the female world.

Conclusion

It has been shown that the fact that female tobacco workers went on strike less often than hatters was in itself irrelevant in the sense that, when they did, they gathered much more people than hatters did. The average size of their strikes made them exceptional, all the more so when compared to the national average; they were 2.7 times bigger whereas the hatters' were 2.9 times smaller. Their proportion in strikes made them exceptional too. Yet, the examination of the context in which strikes occurred revealed some limit to their exceptional characteristics. The fact that more examples of employers or family members putting pressure on workers were found in the hat industry suggests that female hatters' had to face more difficulties. The financial issue was also of great importance. The greater risk on the female hatters' side came also from the fact that only a minority of them belonged to a union. As aids mainly came from unions, female strikers were less likely to receive strike allowances in the hat industry. Furthermore, as suggested by the duration and outcome of strikes, it appears that hatters' means were less. They also had less chances of winning. This could have some psychological effect on the way women perceived the usefulness of strikes.

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[153] Marie Bonnevial, *"La grève des ouvriers chapeliers"*, La Fronde, 11 January 1902, p. 3.
[154] AN F7 13 881, *"Notes: Préfecture de police, 9 octobre 1913, réunion organisée par les ouvriers chapeliers en grève, Paris"*.
[155] *"La grève d'Espéraza au jour le jour"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, July-August 1910, p. 3.

In addition, it appears that the way strikes were perceived both by the federations and women had some influence on women's participation. Even if both federations accepted the fact that strikes should be used only in certain circumstances, the idea of striking appeared more positively in the case of the tobacco industry. There was some kind of distance between the official version and what women thought of resorting to strikes. In fact, female tobacco workers showed much enthusiasm for the idea of striking, sometimes to the detriment of the federation policy. In other words, they had developed a strike culture which was absent amongst female hatters who still appeared less capable of striking on their own. To tobacco workers, strikes did not appear as threatening, they were part of their labour militancy and a way of expressing themselves. While hatters tended to see striking as the last resort, female tobacco workers would not hesitate to demonstrate or strike for a few hours, just to make a point, sometimes giving the impression that they were doing it just for the sake of it, to show their managers that they were not as passive as they thought or they were expected to be.

The characteristics of the industries have also to be taken into consideration. Female tobacco workers were well settled in their industry, whereas hatters were relatively new. The latter had therefore to get established as workers before getting a chance to be listened to as workers. The fact that tobacco workers were settled as workers and had developed a high strike culture was well illustrated by their strikes organised to complain about issues related to their dignity. To them, it was not the role of the management to comment on any aspect of their private life and as women they deserved to be treated with consideration, politeness and decency. Yet, if the hierarchy was not to respect this, then they could not see why they should therefore respect the hierarchy at work. This sometimes led them to treat their attackers with cheekiness, if not scorn. So, even though female tobacco workers, like hatters, went on strike mostly to protect their wages, they also made a point of striking for issues which were particularly relevant for women. This corresponds to what was said about their participation in unions; strikes were to them a way not only of improving their situation as workers but also as women.

According to the examples given in the course of this chapter, it would be difficult to assert that tobacco workers, and women in particular, developed a higher sense of solidarity than hatters in strikes. Like in any situation or event, one cannot suppose or expect that strikes would be unanimously supported, especially when they originally concerned only a small proportion of workers working in the same environment. However, it has been noticed that

tobacco workers often gave disinterested support, even for strikers outside their factory or corporation. So, in this sense, they could be regarded as more supportive than hatters. Yet, the latter too were capable of solidarity. They also organised big strikes when need be, but it was much more difficult for them to gather hundreds of workers in the sense that most workshops were small and spread all over the country. So, it could be argued that the general figures related to the size of strikes reflected more the distribution of workers in the two industries, than a strategy or a difference in solidarity. In both cases, divisions in strikes seem to have originated in the divisions that already existed between unionised and non-unionised workers, as if strikes were the catalyst of pre-existing disagreements and the best opportunity to express them and make them public.

The way women strikers were perceived could not be regarded as a major factor in explaining the difference in female participation in strikes in the sense that, in both cases, they were often regarded as very useful and admirable. Even if some of the terms and expressions used were sometimes tinged with patronising tones, this shows that in no way could male hatters be held fully responsible for the fact that no more women got involved. It was more a matter of opportunity, federation policy and the structure of the industry than a matter of male prejudices. So, even if tobacco workers were exceptional in terms of number, the impression they gave to outsiders did not greatly differ.

This was to be linked to their actual attitude in strikes. When examining it closely, it followed a pattern which was followed by many other women in strikes. So, in a way, it could be said that what made female tobacco workers' originality in strikes was more their number than their attitude. In fact, the features of feminine strike activity in both industries have confirmed Perrot's original assertions. The importance of community has been demonstrated, especially in the case of the female tobacco workers. The use of demonstrations in this context was particularly meaningful; they organised noisy demonstrations in their locality to alert their community and gain its support. They appealed constantly to local officials. They did not hesitate to raise moral issues and made them public. The importance of family has also been examined, especially in reference to the hatters' strike in Espéraza. Employers themselves were well aware of the relation between women's behaviour in strikes and the members of their family. This is why they often used this weapon against the workers. Even commentators could not help making this close connection, thus making female strikers the main link in the family chain. All these elements support Perrot's idea that the local environment was as

important, if not more important, as the notion of class in defining and determining women's militancy. This was particularly relevant in the hat industry. The fact that a good number of female hatters joined a union during a strike and then dropped it shows that the class issue was not their main concern when striking.

In addition to the importance of community and family in female militancy, Raymond A. Jonas stated that *"women workers, through their choice of action, language, and targets of ridicule, reveal a political consciousness similar in certain critical respects to that of the French peasantry as a whole prior to the great awakening of 1848"*[156]. Apart from demonstrating, they commonly used singing and whistling. The use of *charivari* was particularly meaningful, especially for female tobacco workers who did not hesitate to ridicule or humiliate their bosses. These means must be put in their context; it must be borne in mind that women had no right to vote, therefore were deprived of institutional forms of political expression. They appealed to officials not only to get local support, but also because they could not have direct access to official, political channels themselves. As put by Raymond A. Jonas, this is *"precisely because most official channels of political expression were close [that] women were inclined to retain and draw upon the traditional repertoire of peasant politics, and this sometimes meant that their methods were violent, almost by definition outlaw. It also meant that the conduct of women workers was at least potentially more revolutionary than that of men".*[157]

A fourth feature of female militancy deserves some attention, namely a greater sense of practicality. Some of the evidence presented in this chapter, as well as the previous chapter, have supported the claim that women were more interested in getting concrete results rather than debating, that they were more practical. This sense of practicality was to be related to the fact that political expression was forbidden to them; if they did not have the right to say anything politically, then direct action, as opposed to ideology, was the best way for them to get things moving. It could therefore be argued that this is precisely why they still favoured strikes to union membership and why in times of strike they favoured action to discussions at union meetings. The fact that the progressive increase of female union membership corresponded to a decrease in their involvement in strike could therefore be regarded as a sign that female features of militancy were progressively integrated into a greater consensus and

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[156] Raymond A. Jonas, op. cit., p. 292.
Universal suffrage was introduced in 1848.
[157] Ibid., p. 297.

that women were reaching a level a greater political awareness. This would be supported by the fact that female tobacco workers, with their high membership rate, were also in permanent contact with political high officials. Even their strikes were part of the political world. One may wonder to what extent by doing so they were being politicised in a similar way to men.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the introduction, women remained hidden from the history of the labour movement for a long time partly because sources were written and read from a male perspective and according to a male definition of militancy. Consequently, women were thought either non-existent or passive. This research made objection to this assumption in many ways. First of all, by focusing on women's militancy as being different from men, it made it possible to assess and qualify the traditional invisibility of women prior to 1914. All the sources were thoroughly examined according to what women did, as well as what they did not, do in comparison with men. Concentrating on details or on what was not written at all and reading between the lines was sometimes as informative as texts on women. This detailed examination of sources made it possible to develop a balanced analysis of gender relation in the early labour movement and gave new perspective to the way the invisibility of women in archives could be dealt with. Secondly, the new approach of this research, based on a comparison between women in two industries, made it possible to assess women's militancy, in the way it should always be approached, that is to say not only in relation to men but also in relation to their working environment, the means available to them and what they actually wanted.

Keeping the title of this study in mind, a wide range of issues were examined according to two main perspectives. Firstly, the elements which could have made the difference in quantitative terms were studied thoroughly, such as the nature and characteristics of the industries and workforce or the structure and policies of unions and federations. Secondly, because membership does not necessarily lead to being an active militant and militancy itself covers a variety of activities, the term difference had to be qualified. So, as a whole, this investigation tried to answer the two following questions; what made the quantitative difference and was there much difference between female tobacco workers and hatters in qualitative terms? Answering these questions raised additional, wider issues such as the actual function of unions and the role and place of women in society as a whole. This shows the extent to which the woman question could not be dealt with separately and was intrinsically linked to any aspect of life. As every chapter contained its own conclusions regarding the issues to which they were related, what follows is to concentrate on key illustrative elements to form an overall view.

The importance given to the socio-economic context as well as to the notion of practicality was crucial in the understanding of female membership in so far as women had to face many impediments related to their double working days and family responsibilities. Quantitatively speaking, Chapter 1 in particular examined the extent to which the fact that tobacco workers were state workers working together in big factories made the difference. As state workers, they were different because they benefited from better wages and benefits, as well as less working hours and more job security for instance. They were also systematically part of the political world. Their concentration on the same sites made their unionisation easier and more meaningful in many ways. So, it can be said that, practically speaking, it was easier for them to join unions and protest because, in terms of the characteristics of their industry and their own characteristics as workers, they were better equipped to do so.

In fact, this study demonstrated that the above characteristics were the most relevant and pertinent ones to explain the difference in women's membership between the two industries under scrutiny. In addition to practical issues, they had some ramifications on a considerable amount of factors that were taken into consideration, be they psychological or related to the wider issue of women in society for instance. In this respect, it is not the reformism chosen by both federations itself which contributed to a difference in female participation, but rather the context and ways in which this reformism was used. In the case of the tobacco workers, reformism was more or less compulsory to achieve anything, but no evidence suggested that this led to male leaders wishing to get directly involved as politicians. Politically speaking, male tobacco workers seem to have limited themselves to the same means that were available to women at the time, therefore women could get involved too on the same level as men. On the other hand, in the hat industry, workers' reformism led to direct parliamentary representation, an outlet denied to women, therefore they could not fully identify themselves as militants, at least not in the same way as men could, even if they wanted to. This example illustrates the extent to which the working environment influenced the way workers perceived trade unionisation, therefore militancy itself.

Chapter 2 discarded men's or unions' attitudes and practice towards women as the main explanatory factors in the understanding of the quantitative difference in so far as they were rather similar in both federations and respective unions. So, whereas hostile attitudes were held responsible for women's lack of involvement in general, this investigation provided

evidential basis to suggest that positive attitudes, at least in principle, did not necessarily lead to exceptionally higher membership rates. Further examination into this field in other industries would be necessary to qualify or confirm such a suggestion, but it seems particularly relevant in the case of milliners. Although the hatters' federation concentrated on their unionisation in particular and organised endless meetings for them, it kept complaining about their lack of interest throughout the period. This lack of interest could be related to the practical money issue, for instance, since it was shown that this issue was of some relevance to explain female membership. Because female tobacco workers earned comparatively more and their subscriptions were comparatively less, joining a union represented less financial pressure for them than for female hatters. Yet, the case of the designers, who were highly paid compared to other female milliners, but practically absent from unions, revealed that a lack of money could not always in itself explain the gap existing in female membership between different unions or federations. Enough money could allow a woman to join if she wished to, but too much of it, compared to fellow workers, could also create some kind of class barrier in the eyes of some highly paid women not ready to mix with and help those less fortunate.

This last example shows that the notion of class could have a role to play. Indeed, it must be considered that being part of a movement implies understanding the usefulness and relevance of this movement. That is why class awareness and education appeared crucial in the context of this study. Yet, it was shown that in both cases, although dissidence was not necessarily a female prerogative and no systematic correlation could be made between women and class divisions, women's awareness of class was sometimes limited. Whereas female hatters tended to join a union when their own interests were at stake and then dropped their membership once they had obtained what they wanted, female tobacco workers tended to give priority to practical issues and immediate results, which sometimes created divisions and went against the interests of the unions or federations. So, female tobacco workers' high participation rate did not necessarily lead to a deeper class awareness or stronger class identity, nor could it be explained by a better understanding of the problems faced by the working class, all the more so because, as relatively privileged workers, they were themselves on the edge. What made the difference though was the usefulness of the unions themselves and what they actually obtained as the result of their activities. It was seen, for instance, that they were more likely to have their claims accepted in comparison to hatters, which was directly related to the fact that they were state workers. So, it could be argued that their position as state, privileged workers

made them more willing and able to protect their rights and therefore had a direct impact on their militancy[1].

The example of designers, as well as the fact that not all tobacco workers joined a union, reveals the extent to which women's own attitudes to trade unionism could play a part in the explanation of the difference in participation. Obviously, they did not have to join if they did not want to and one has to accept the fact that some of them did not join, not because they were women or it was too difficult, but because of their own personal circumstances, interests or personality, in the same way as some men did. In this context, the designers could be chosen as a typical example of some women unwilling to become part of a movement, despite unions' particular effort towards them, because it did not correspond to their own interests. Yet, it must be envisaged that other women did join unions, and became actively involved, because it was in their interest to do so. In this context, tobacco workers were no exception. Despite numerous examples of solidarity, they too could regard their involvement as an opportunist way of promoting their own particular interests, for instance, sometimes to the detriment of the unity of the movement. So, despite their high membership rate, as members, they did not always follow the policy or decisions of their union or federation. Furthermore, it could be argued that their higher membership rate did not come from the fact that they were different as women, but because they were different as workers, which also puts some limit on their exceptional characteristics as members. They were more numerous most of all because their working environment made things easier for them. They were not naturally more attracted to unions, nor were they born militants, but they happened to be in the right industry, where a feminine workforce was regarded as the norm, at the right time, just after the legalisation of unions and before the industry got too mechanised and women replaced by men.

The above examples indicate that, although women shared a common lot, as workers, they were as heterogeneous as the working class itself, hence the danger to consider women

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[1] In this context, one may wonder to what extent the idea that state workers' militancy and strategy depended on their relatively privileged situation is still of particular relevance today. The following anecdote could be regarded as a good illustration of the fact that they are still regarded as privileged, if not opportunist, by some members of the public. In December 1995, when the *Musée Guimet* in Paris closed its doors to follow the industrial action that was raging all over France, a poster was put on its front to explain that the staff had decided to go on strike as an act of solidarity. Underneath the announcement, somebody had scribbled some personal, almost insulting, comments, stating among others, that if they worked for a private company, they would have been sacked straight away. A direct link could be made between being a state worker and being able to afford a solidarity strike.

workers as a global entity. Therefore, in this context, it would be as inappropriate to say that women were generally not reluctant to join unions and militate as to say that they were. More case studies in this field would probably show the same heterogeneity. Yet, it would be interesting to go further into the relationship between women and trade unionism in connection to the nature of their industry and the idea that female state workers were better equipped to militate. This would allow to move the debate over women's membership away from gendered, negative perspectives to concentrate on their ability, potential and achievements as militants.

Even if their militancy went further than hatters', a closer look revealed that female tobacco workers too were limited as militants in at least two ways. In terms of responsibilities, it was shown that they too were under-represented at the top of the union or federative hierarchy. Even when they were chosen as representatives, they were expected to represent women, and not necessarily any union member. This under-representation corresponded to the traditional position of women in society as a whole. Giving women posts of responsibility would have meant giving them power, which in turn could have been regarded as a threat to men's traditional position of power as a whole. This under-representation also corresponded to the under-representation of women in any other aspect of the political, public sphere, and as such, unions followed and reflected a pre-determined pattern of representation, therefore trade unionists as such could not be blamed[2].

It was shown that female militants in the tobacco industry had only limited potential for changing the situation of women as a whole. It could have been expected that their greater involvement contributed to changing traditional views on women, but it did not. Outsiders and the majority of male militants regarded them as exceptional because they corresponded to what was expected from female militants: not to oppose men, work towards the restoration of women at home and use their feminine qualities to serve the cause of unions, therefore to prolong the paternalistic order of society. It could have been assumed that the fact that female tobacco workers were in the majority in their unions changed their perception of power, but it did not. Women themselves appeared to have been respectful of the traditional, political protocol which made them under-represented, like Jacoby thanking and being grateful to the

[2] One must not forget for instance that 1946, the year when women got the opportunity to vote for the first time, was accompanied by the accession of women to important union responsibilities. In all the federations without exception, one or several women got access to posts in the leadership. For the first time, in 1946 a woman was appointed as the CGT secretary.

CGT congress for giving her a chair[3]. They accepted this state of affairs, and by accepting it, they prolonged it. It could also have been assumed that female tobacco workers took advantage of their majority and the fact that their unions were in their formative years to put forward their skills and experience in service of a redefinition of the position of women, but they did not. They did not make an asset of their number and the timing to call into question women's status, neither at work, nor in unions or society in general, because they were themselves convinced that their role as reproducers took precedence over their role as producers. So, they also accepted an order based on a relative masculine superiority as well as a masculine vision of society. In other words, they assimilated into the labour movement by assimilating masculine values, thus denying any possibility for the assimilation of their differences as women in the movement.

Their case casts doubt on the thesis that where women workers are in majority in any particular industry or union they are able to reconstruct their conceptualisation of what the role of women in society should be. Yet, this must be put in its historical context and several points must be considered in order to explain why female tobacco workers did not, or rather could not, redefine their role as women, nor change their perception of womanhood.

Firstly, they must be put in a much wider context, since they were women and part of the labour movement. It has been shown by previous researchers, like Marie Marmo Mullaney for instance, that socialist women were generally reluctant to embrace feminist issues because they themselves as women faced difficulties in being accepted in a movement. Even if this movement encouraged their participation in theory, in practice it made it clear that the woman question was related to class and economics, not gender itself[4]. So, in this context, no wonder female tobacco workers were no exception.

This study also revealed that, by refusing feminism as a principle, the labour movement adopted principles of the dominant class it was meant to destroy because it was incapable of going beyond the male dominant ideology related to the dominant class:

> *"La classe ouvrière, au sens large du terme, n'est pas extérieure à la société de classe; même lorsqu'elle est en état d'infériorité sociale presque absolue, comme ce fut le cas tout au long du XIXe siècle, elle est intégrée à l'ordre existant, notamment dans le domaine de l'idéologie (...) Les organisations du mouvement ouvrier reproduisent quotidiennement les rapports de pouvoir qui*

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[3] See Chapter 3, p. 151.

[4] Marie Marmo Mullaney, *"Gender and the Socialist Revolutionary Role, 1871-1921"*, Historical Reflections/ Reflexions historiques, 11 (2), 1984, p. 148.

forment la trame de la vie sociale. Et c'est en cela qu'elles sont constitutionnellement inaptes à intégrer la lutte des femmes."[5]

In a way, the same could be said about feminism in general. Socialism and feminism were based on the same principle in the sense that they both recognised the power of one component over the other and the inequality it created, thus aiming at ending inequality one way or another, but they both reproduced these "rapports de pouvoir" in their convictions that female workers could not help themselves. In this context, female tobacco workers could not be expected to be different. The fact that they did not integrate the woman question as a main issue into their struggle suggests that conceptualisations of roles are not amenable to reconstruction through participation in labour organisations. Yet, the actual function of unions at the time must be considered; unions' main aim was not to put an end to inequalities between genders in society, but to the inequalities created by the economic system. So, even though there was economic inequality between men and women, as a principle they could not give priority to issues related only to women. The timing is also important. Unions were supposed to be new organisations for a new world, or at least a better world for workers, but if women were not supposed to be workers in society, how could unions be blamed for not changing women's status? Their views on, and perceptions of, the woman question may appear limited to contemporaries, but one must not forget that the period under scrutiny corresponded to the formative years of the trade union movement, that is to say the fundamental years. As the woman question was not to them a fundamental issue in the suppression of the capitalist order, they did not put it on their agenda in the construction of the movement. Historically speaking, it was too early for this question to be dealt with directly. Even if unions have moved on and have widened their function in society by taking into account "new" issues such as gender inequalities, they are still conditional on more deeply ingrained social factors that can only be transformed through a much wider social consensus. The example of Nicole Notat, for instance, shows that women are still struggling to be recognised as militants and leaders on the same footing as men[6]. Their gender still determines the way they are treated. It could be argued that they should not put forward the fact that they are women if they want to be treated as equals, but why should not they if they are actually equals?

Another point to consider is the actual awareness of the woman question by female workers themselves. Their own conceptualisation of roles was also conditional on more deeply

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[5] Denis Berger, *"Mouvement ouvrier, femmes, pouvoirs"*, Femmes pouvoirs. Actes du colloque d'Albi des 19 et 20 mars 1992, Paris, Kimé, 1993, pp. 110-111.

[6] See: Nicole Notat, Je voudrais vous dire, Paris, Seuil/ Calmann-Lévy, 1997, pp. 145-164.

ingrained factors and their own attitudes corresponded to an obvious limit in their understanding of this question. Yet, once again, the timing has to be taken into account. In a way, it could be argued that it was too late for female hatters to impose any views on the matter if they had any. The weight of tradition was too heavy and anchored in their unions, and they were so few in number any way. In turn, while the woman question was regarded as moving forwards to improve women's status, female tobacco workers gave the impression that they wanted to move backwards. They failed to integrate new ideas on women but could it be said that they actually missed an opportunity? Not so in the sense that their awareness of the imbalance between genders was not yet developed enough for them to redefine another alternative for women. Their education, or lack of it, had undoubtedly a role to play in this lack of awareness. In the same way as one cannot miss what one has not got, one cannot envisage the possibility of improvement if the situation is not regarded as problematic. They did not see gender inequality as the problem because in practice, at work, they did not seem to have suffered from it too much, and in theory, their limited education and knowledge of feminist issues prevented them from considering their low wages, for instance, as the recognition and consecration of their inferior status, not only as workers, but as women. This is why the needs they expressed through their claims were not necessarily gendered; they simply conformed to the needs of a majority of women whose work was an economic necessity. They perhaps would have preferred to stay at home if they had had the choice, hence their wish to restore the original order when women were at home and men at work. This could not be described as progress, but progress can only have positive results when and where it is felt needed.

It must also be considered that, since female tobacco workers were in the majority, they probably did not feel the need to promote "feminist" ideas. Everything they did in favour of women was regarded as normal, not "feminist", since it represented and met the needs of the majority. Their case makes the difference between a feminist and feminine form of trade unionism clear. A feminist union would probably have concentrated on the same issues whatever the industry, whereas it has been shown that female tobacco workers' claims were mostly related to their own situation as workers in their industry. Even when they went on strike to have their dignity as women respected, they did it not only because they were women - they were not the only working women not to be respected and men too supported these strikes - but mainly because the characteristics of their industry and status as workers allowed

them to do so. Furthermore, feminism acknowledged the specificity of women in society as a whole, as opposed to men, but how could this specificity be recognised and acknowledged in a mostly female environment? It could be argued that, as the specific needs of women can only be acknowledged as being specific when women are recognised as a particular case in a male dominated environment, it would not have been very efficient for female tobacco workers to promote feminist ideas in their unions.

One of the main questions introduced in the course of this study was whether women did not get more involved because they did not meet the needs of unions or because unions did not meet their needs. Such a question was difficult to assess. As a whole, in both cases, women, despite examples of gender divisions, fit into the mould and did not try to impose a new perception of trade unionism. Yet, the fact that the hat industry had a long tradition of male dominated trade unionism must not be forgotten. It was probably more difficult for female hatters to fit into an old mould which originally had not been made to accommodate them. Therefore, the assumption that female hatters did not meet the needs of unions in comparison to tobacco workers must not be entirely discarded. However, this study suggested, and confirmed on many occasions, that the hypothesis that unions did not meet women's needs was also a relevant explanation in the understanding of differences in quantitative participation. In this respect, the political involvement of both federations and the way they used reformism was a pertinent example. The nature of the tobacco industry allowed women to take part in the political world directly. This did not make them politicians; for instance, Jacoby made it clear that she did not want to take sides politically. However, this made them politically aware, if not political instruments, and their militancy could be regarded as political, at least in its primary sense, that is to say part of the polity. So, their case shows that women could develop some political awareness, when the context in which they evolved justified such an involvement and gave them an opportunity.

Although women were expected to act like men while in unions, they acted differently on many occasions. For instance, women in general still tended to favour strikes and direct results to the detriment of union membership. So, it could be argued that strikes suited women more than union membership. Yet, unlike hatters who corresponded to this general trend, female tobacco workers' proportion in unions were about the same as their proportion in strikes. They

had therefore reached a balance between union activity and direct action. One may wonder to what extent their political involvement played a role in this state of affairs. Did their direct participation in politics make them lose some of the characteristics of female militancy? By entering the male dominated political world, they accepted masculine rules, in the same way as they did in unions. For instance, Jacoby did not call into question the fact that the traditional under-representation of women in politics was to be repeated in the lack of female leadership in unions. However, this does not necessarily mean that by doing so, she also recognised her inferior status as a militant. Assessing female militancy according to pre-determined, male values must be carefully avoided. Who is to say that the best choice is to work from the bottom up or from the top down? Women were deprived of the top anyway, so they had to work from the bottom, but, at the same time, it could be argued that this also corresponded exactly to a "female" characteristic, to a wish amongst women to concentrate on action from the bottom rather than on responsibilities and power. They may not have wished to lead, to attain power for themselves, preferring to serve a cause rather than managing it. They also may have thought that real progress would be obtained from below and not from above, as attested in their involvement in strikes. In this connection, Marie Marmo Mullaney has shown how revolutionary women did not want to play the political game to its full potential, which was refused to them anyway, because it would mean exercising control over others. For instance, Louise Michel[7] refused to exercise power because, as a woman, she had been the victim of authority herself, therefore did not wish to exercise it over others. Other women, like Alexandra Kollontai, were also aware of their lack of training in the matter, thus showing their integrity: because they were not used to and trained to lead, they did not want to exercise leadership[8]. Therefore, as a whole, it could be said that women, and tobacco workers amongst them, did not call into question the fact that they did not have any position of leadership because they did not want to lead anyway. Yet, such an argument was directly related to their position in society and must be qualified according to what was previously said about their limited education and awareness of the woman question. Indeed, it could be envisaged that they did not want to lead because they did not know how to do it or that they could actually do it as well as men.

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[7] Louise Michel (1830-1905), the famous Red Virgin, got actively involved in the Paris Commune as an agitator, nurse, orator and soldier. She was eventually deported to New Caledonia for her activities. Upon her return to France, she became a powerful revolutionary symbol for the nascent socialist movement.
For further information on Louise Michel, see: Marie Marmo Mullaney, op. cit., pp. 104-151.
[8] Ibid., p. 146.

The reference to revolutionary women is not innocent, in so far as many characteristics of these women, as described by Marie Marmo Mullaney, were relevant to cases of female hatters and female tobacco workers. For instance, it is no coincidence that the female hatter Léonie Le Grand was compared to Louise Michel when L'Ouvrier chapelier made an attempt to describe her militancy[9]. Marie Marmo Mullaney has also shown how revolutionary women *"saw both their socialism and their political involvement as a means to respond to immediate social crisis rather than as the implementation of an abstract economic or revolutionary theory alone"*[10]. Chapter 2 in particular suggested that women tended to be more interested in concrete action, immediate results and practical issues, and in this connection, Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrated that neither female hatters nor tobacco workers were exceptional. Although tobacco workers got involved in parliamentary reformism, they did not deny the use of strike, nor did they reject the general strike which was one of the weapons of revolutionary syndicalism[11]. They even came to be criticised by male tobacco workers for favouring demonstrations to delegations and negotiations[12]. So, it could be argued that although their aim might have appeared reformist -they were not interested in revolution as such- their means of action could be regarded as potentially more revolutionary than men's. The example of Jacoby revealed that as mothers and wives, women had to be caring, supportive, devoted and comforting, but as militants, they should not hesitate to become as ferocious as lions, to use extreme means, therefore to accomplish a temporary revolution in their role to achieve the restoration of their real role[13]. This shows that using revolutionary means did not necessarily mean leading a revolution.

In this context, one may wonder to what extent the reformism of the tobacco workers' federation, as well as the critics of women's attachment to strikes made by some male militants, corresponded to men's preoccupation to retain their position of power that the majority of women in unions endangered. At least, when dealing with politics, they were in a masculine world. Yet, this could also reflect their better understanding of what was best for the whole movement in the long term, at least in their minds. The CGT itself progressively abandoned revolutionary syndicalism as the best way of obtaining improvement. So, it could be argued that male tobacco workers were a step forward when wishing to negotiate, while

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[9] L'Ouvrier chapelier, November-December 1911, p. 4.
[10] Marie Marmo Mullaney, op. cit., p. 133.
[11] It would have been interesting to examine the impact women could have had on revolutionary syndicalism if more effort had been made to incorporate them into it.
[12] See in particular Chapter 4, p. 194.
[13] See Chapter 3, pp. 163-164.

their female counterparts were still performing some *"bruyantes et inutiles manifestations"*, as if the latter were a female prerogative showing that female workers had not yet reached the same level of understanding of the potential of the political channels. Yet, who was to decide which means was the best and who was to blame if women were still using means from the past? The difference in masculine and feminine behaviour too was intrinsically related to gender difference in society as a whole. Women's behaviour may have been regarded as more revolutionary, or at least more subversive, but when looking closely at French history since the Great Revolution, French women had a tradition of political participation mainly, if not only, in revolutionary situations, as opposed to political situations, since they did not have the right to vote. Thus, the fact that the female pattern of militancy varied from men's came mainly from the fact that they had been deprived of the same channels as men. As society had failed to treat them on equal footing with men, they were not fully integrated into and initiated to the republican polity. Consequently, they tended to stick to traditional means such as marches, demonstrations and charivaris and tried to make the best of these forms of expression since they were the only ones available to them. Female tobacco workers were privileged in the sense that they could express themselves through political channels and take an active role in influencing parliamentary decisions, but they could not be expected to have reached the same awareness of institutional politics as men since they did not have the right to vote.

In the same way, the male dominated labour movement defined rules according to its own knowledge and experience, and its male form of militancy had reached a degree of maturation that women could not yet dream of because, as women, their knowledge and experience differed. However, it could be argued that women were mature in their own way, a way that differed from the male way, but that revealed that they were not as passive and ignorant as some liked to say. Their own experience defined the way in which they tried to improve things. As they had been deprived for so long of the required, official training, they developed their own skills and used different forms of expression, like a blind person developing other senses, or a dumb person learning sign language, in order to compensate for their lack of political possibilities. In some way, women at the time could be compared with disabled people in the sense that they were restricted in their ability by law and tradition and consequently adapted. Some decided to follow the same route as men, thus choosing the hard way, others preferred to stick to more traditionally female ways, but whatever the way they chose, only men could say that their achievements and ability as militants were worth less. The

case of female tobacco workers and hatters showed that female militants did their bit, maybe not to the expectations and standards of men, but after all, one can only compare what is comparable. Women's achievements could not be assessed in the same way as those of men because their means, possibilities and targets differed. One can only compare what is of equal value too, if one is to avoid misconception and unfairness, this is why it is as dangerous as inadequate to assess female militancy in the same way as one would assess male militancy, because they did not, and still do not, follow the same scale of values.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1.1

Proportion of women in industry

YEAR	1896	1901	1906	1911
Total working population	5 377 050	5 819 800	5 979 200	5 746 000
Total of women in the workforce	1 888 950	2 124 600	2 254 300	2 192 500
Proportion of women in the workforce	35.12%	36.50%	37.70%	38.15%

[1] Including employers, manual and clerical workers.

Source: Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, p. 14.

APPENDIX 1.2

Map of France showing the 21 tobacco factories

APPENDIX 1.3

Wages in the tobacco industry (in francs per day)

YEARS	Male	Female	Proportion of women's wages compared to men's
1890	4.78	2.82	58.99%
1891	4.8	2.82	58.75%
1892	4.93	2.89	58.62%
1893	4.97	3.04	61.16%
1894	5.08	3.17	62.40%
1895	5.15	3.23	62.70%
1896	5.27	3.3	62.60%
1897	5.32	3.39	63.72%
1898[1]	5.36	3.34	62.31%
1899	5.44	3.34	61.39%
1900	5.51	3.55	64.42%
1901	5.6	3.59	64.10%
1902	5.69	3.75	65.90%
1903	5.79	3.85	66.49%
1904	5.91	3.94	66.66%
1905[2]	5.89	3.93	66.70%
1906	6.17	4.1	66.45%
1907	6.33	4.26	67.29%
1910	6.68	4.51	67.5%
1913	7.11	4.74	66.66%

[1] According to Charles Mannheim, the decrease in women's wages for that year was simply due to the large number of apprentices employed when recruitment was resumed.

[2] The figures from 1890 to 1905 refer to average wages for a 10 hour working day. As the 9 hour working day was introduced in the second semester of 1905, the 1905 average wages refer only to the first semester.

Sources: This table has been established according to:
From 1890 to 1899: Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État (Tabacs et allumettes), Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, pp. 466-469.
From 1900 to 1907: L'Écho des tabacs, June 1909, p. 10.
From 1910 to 1913: Claude Réal, Le Tabac et les allumettes, Paris, Doin, 1928, p. 137.

APPENDIX 1.4

Examples of wages in the hat industry (in francs, for a ten hour working day)

REGIONS	Men			Women		
	Businesses where the number of workers is between ...			Businesses where the number of workers is between ...		
	100-499	25-99	1-24	100-499	25-99	1-24
Paris[1]	5.35F	7.8F	-	2.3F	3.3F	-
Suburbs[1]	-	5F	-	-	2.2F	-
Seine[1]	5.35F	6.45F	-	2.3F	2.95F	-
Vosges and Territoire de Belfort[2]	3.8F	-	-	2.1F	-	-
Meurthe et Moselle[2]	3.75F	4.65F	-	1.85F	2.95F	-
Tarn and Aveyron[2]	2.75F	-	2.45F	2.1F	-	1.1F
Pyrénées Orientales and Aude[2]	3.15F	-	3.5F	1.6F	-	1.25F
Tarn et Garonne, Lot et Garonne and Corrèze[2]	3.05F	2.5F	2.4F	1.9F	1.55F	1.1F

Sources: This table has been established according to:
1- Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893, pp. 502-503.
2- Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 4, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1897, pp. 177, 193-194.

APPENDIX 1.5

Average working day in the tobacco and hat industries between 1891 and 1893

INDUSTRIES	8-9 hours	9-10 hours	10-11 hours	11-12 hours	More than 12 hours
TOBACCO (out of 18 factories)	1	15	1	1	-
HAT (out of 25 businesses)	1	12	9	3	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 4, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1897, pp. 68-72.

APPENDIX 1.6 Workers in the tobacco industry

FACTORIES	Men					Women				
	1890[1]	1895[1]	1900[1]	1905[2]	1913[3]	1890[1]	1895[1]	1900[1]	1905[3]	1913[4]
Bordeaux	58	54	60			1 016	887	954	788	
Chateauroux	92	91	97			1 323	1 183	1 345	1 137	
Dieppe	43	45	46			968	831	893	770	
Dijon	63	59	76			360	315	417	369	
Le Havre	44	39	46			401	334	366	344	
Le Mans	60	62	77			454	389	485	437	
Lille	153	151	174			789	674	785	695	
Limoges	85	107	98			-	-	-	-	
Lyon	76	72	73			512	422	479	418	
Marseille	88	86	83			1 162	996	994	881	
Morlaix	135	98	104			1 106	831	987	808	
Nancy	60	60	61			741	648	745	659	
Nantes	78	80	91			1 262	1 025	1 123	934	
Nice	52	46	51			867	717	776	672	
Orléans	13	15	38			152	142	284	280	
Pantin	77	78	87			569	634	699	664	
Gros Caillou/ Issy	219	165	153			1 359	1 109	1 084	866	
Reuilly	52	39	39			997	833	802	698	
Riom	45	54	59			465	460	548	485	
Tonneins	66	64	61			939	705	821	699	
Toulouse	99	91	86			1 306	1 010	1 118	960	
TOTAL	1 658	1 556	1 660	2 020	2 511	16 748	14 154	15 705	13 564	15 673

Sources: 1- Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État (Tabacs et allumettes), Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, p. 465.
2- Claude Réal, Le tabac et les allumettes, Paris, Gaston Goin, 1925, p. 137.
3- L'écho des tabacs, February 1908, p. 4.
4- Seita, Le Monopole des tabacs en France, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1948, p. 122.

APPENDIX 1.7

The working population in the hat and tobacco industries in 1896

1896	Making of felt, silk and plush hats	Hatters	Finishers and felt hat dyers	Kepis and caps	Fashion	Straw hats	Straw hat finishing	Total for hat industry	Total for tobacco industry
Working population[1]									
Total:	13 811	3 191	154	3 652	44 530	4 580	140	70 058	13 800
Men:	9 150	2 102	110	1 106	687	1 983	77	15 215	2 360
Women:	4 659	1 088	44	2 546	43 846	2 597	63	54 840	11 431
Unknown situation									
Men:	164	241	-	11		1	-	417	-
Women:	155	227	-	143	819	1	-	1345	-
Workers[2]									
Men:	7 490	626	77	671	408	1 767	57	11 096	2 348
Women:	4 075	413	37	1 418	13 598	2 468	19	22 028	11369
Total of people working together in the same business[3]									
Men:	8 298	862	102	901	682	1 959	70	12 874	2 348
Women	4 275	526	44	1 525	20 271	2 520	26	29 187	11 369
Unemployed people									
Men:	163	458	1	14	3	8	4	651	12
Women:	67	196	-	97	1 046	15	-	1 421	62
People working on their own/ piece workers with no steady jobs									
Men:	525	541	7	180	2	15	3	1 273	-
Women:	162	139	-	781	21 707	61	37	22 887	-

1- Including children.

2- Excluding children.

3- Any determined place where a group of people worked together on a permanent basis and under the direction of one or more managers was regarded as a business. Isolated workers and unemployed people were classified separately.

Source: This table has been established according to: Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Résultats statistiques du recensement des industries et professions du 29 mars 1896, Paris Imprimerie Nationale, 4 vols., 1899-1901.

APPENDIX 1.8

The working population in the hat and tobacco industries in 1901

1901	Felt, silk and plush hats	Hatters	Finishers and felt hat dyers	Kepis and caps	Fashion	Garnishing	Straw hat making	Straw hat finishing	Total for hat industry	Total for tobacco industry
Working population										
Total:	13 187	1 643	102	4 308	50 134	60	5 055	171	74 660	16 076
Men:	8 320	1 118	83	1 351	920	20	2 262	123	14 197	2 385
Women:	4 867	525	19	2 957	49 214	40	2 793	48	60 463	13 691
Unknown situation										
Men:	40	85	-	-			-	-	125	-
Women	36	19	-	-	4	1	-	-	60	-
Workers										
Men:	7 230	235	59	927	516	18	2 023	99	18 631	2 385
Women:	4 452	162	16	1 456	16 883	19	2 600	30	25 618	13 674
Unemployed										
Men:	117	233	1	16	2		9	1	379	
Women:	63	103	-	80	1 247	2	5	11	1 511	17
Isolated people:										
Men:	315	339	-	146	5		17	2	824	-
Women:	122	104	-	1 126	23 998	15	115	1	25 481	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Résultats statistiques de recensement des industries et professions. Dénombrement général de la population effectué le 24 mars 1901, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 5 vols., 1902-1907.

APPENDIX 1.9

The working population in the hat and tobacco industries in 1906

1906	Felt, silk and plush hats	Hatters	Felt hat fitters	Cap makers	Milliners	Garnishing	Straw hats	Straw hat fitters	Total for the hat industry	Total for the tobacco industry
Working population										
Total:	12 556	1 591	76	5 238	55 703	499	5 181	242	81 086	15 902
Men:	8 224	878	64	1 760	1 167	96	2 303	170	14 662	2 491
Women:	4 332	713	12	3 478	54 536	403	2 878	72	66 424	13 413
Workers:										
Total:	10 247	182	51	2 367	17 680	301	4 143	181	35 152	
Men:	6 440	114	43	869	266	29	1 676	123	9 560	1 480
Women:	3 807	68	8	1 498	17 414	272	2 467	58	25 592	12 845
Unemployed:										
Men:	152	172	4	23	0	0	12	2	365	-
Women:	41	87	0	70	1 366	2	16	0	1 582	-
Isolated people:										
Men:	194	482	2	287	0	2	22	2	991	-
Women:	148	507	0	1 586	26 543	48	230	0	29 062	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Résultats statistiques de recensement général de la population effectué le 4 mars 1906, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 3 vols., 1907-1911.

APPENDIX 1.10

Description of work in the tobacco industry before 1914

Preparation

"Le tabac est livré aux manufactures, séché et fortement comprimé dans des *balles* et *boucauts*. Les feuilles sont réunies par groupes ou bouquets appelés *manoques*.

Un lien sépare le feuillage de la *caboche*. Des hommes forment la brigade dite de service général, décousent les enveloppes ou déshabillent les *boucauts* à la hache.

La première opération de toute fabrication est la *composition*. Elle est faite par des femmes et consiste à réunir des poids déterminés de diverses espèces de tabacs, dont le mélange constitue la matière spéciale à chaque produit.

Les *épouIardeuses* détachent ensuite les feuilles de chaque *manoque* les unes des autres, et mélangent avec soin toutes les espèces entrant dans chaque composition.

Lorsque les tabacs doivent être hachés, elles les *capsent*, c'est-à-dire les étendent régulièrement et les réunissent au moyen de sangles, en *ballottins* pesant une dizaine de kilos.

L'*époulardage* est précédé pour certaines espèces d'un léger arrosage destiné à faciliter cette opération (*mouillade*) préparatoire, et pour d'autres de l'*écabochage*, c'est-à-dire de la section de la *caboche*, qui est exécutée aussi par des femmes, au moyen d'un fort couteau animé mécaniquement (...). Pendant l'*époulardage*, les ouvrières travaillent assises, autour de grands paniers.

La manipulation de quelques tabacs à l'état sec provoque une poussière désagréable, mais nullement malsaine en soi. La *composition* demande un peu d'attention, l'*écabochage* quelque prudence, le serrage des *ballottins* un certain effort, mais aucun de ces travaux n'exige un grand apprentissage.

Les feuilles subissent ensuite une *mouillade* destinée à rendre aux tissus leur souplesse; c'est tantôt une aspersion, tantôt un trempage dans l'eau pure ou dans une solution titrée de sel; parfois on emploie un mouilleur mécanique.

La *mouillade* est exécutée presque partout par des hommes, mais il y a [quelques] années les femmes en étaient chargées dans plusieurs manufactures. Elle n'exige ni apprentissage, ni attention, ni effort.

Un *lavage* méthodique, puis un *essorage*, permettent de débarrasser d'un excès de nicotine certains tabacs employés pour les cigares. Cette double opération doit être conduite avec soin, mais elle n'occupe souvent qu'un seul ouvrier mouilleur dans chaque manufacture.
Telles sont les principales mains-d'oeuvre préparatoires que tous les tabacs doivent subir avant toute confection."

Snuff

"Après *mouillade* les tabacs entrant dans la fabrication de la poudre sont découpés en lanières au moyen d'un appareil mécanique appelé *hachoir de gros*, puis réunis en masses, c'est-à-dire amoncelés régulièrement. Après une *fermentation* méthodique qui dure environ cinq mois, le tabac est soumis au *râpage*. Cette opération se fait d'une manière complètement automatique; les tabacs [sont entraînés] dans des *moulins* et des *blutoirs*, jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient transformés en une poudre ayant un grain de la finesse voulue, et qui prend le nom de *râpé sec*. Après une mise en dépôt d'un mois, on imbibe le *râpé sec* d'une solution titrée de sel (...). Il est alors versé dans des *cases* (...) pouvant contenir de 25 à 35 000 kilos, où il subit une nouvelle *fermentation* méthodique (....).

On obtient ainsi le *râpé parfait*, qui après un *tamisage mécanique*, est versé dans des tonneaux où il est pilonné, puis emmagasiné.

(...) Cette fabrication est arrivée à un si haut degré de perfectionnement, qu'elle peut être réalisée par un groupe peu nombreux d'hommes qui exécutent indistinctement toutes les manoeuvres. (...) L'ensemble de ces travaux, dont la conduite et la surveillance sont délicates, [ne présentent] pour l'ouvrier aucune espèce de difficulté.

Il y a lieu de remarquer, toutefois, que les transvasements constituent une manipulation excessivement pénible (...). Si donc une telle main d'oeuvre n'exige pas d'apprentissage, elle nécessite, par contre, une accoutumance à laquelle certaines constitutions peuvent rester complètement rebelles."

Rolls and plugs

"Les opérations particulières à la fabrication de ces produits sont le *filage* et le *rôlage*. Le *filage* a pour effet de tordre les feuilles de tabacs, écôtées et assouplies par une *mouillade*, de manière à obtenir une corde (...). Il est exécuté actuellement par des femmes au moyen de rouets mécaniques dont l'usage n'est ni difficile ni fatigant.

Le *rôlage* consiste à enrouler le *filé* autour de mandrins. Les hommes chargés de ce travail procèdent ensuite au *trempage* des rôles dans le jus de tabac et enfin à leur *compression* à la presse hydraulique.

Pour transformer le filé en *carotte*, on lui fait subir une fermentation d'un mois, procédé suivi d'une série de manipulations: *aplatissage*, *pression en moule*, *mise sous lisière* (consistant à enrouler une bande de toile autour de la *carotte*). (...) Cette fabrication (...) n'exige de la part de l'ouvrier ni habileté ni préparation."

Packed tobacco

"Les feuilles de tabac *capsées* et mises en *ballottins* sont transportées après *mouillade* au *hachage*. (....) Les hachoirs sont des appareils dans lesquels le tabac est comprimé entre de fortes toiles sans fin et entraîné à l'état de masse compacte sous un couteau (...) qui abat des tranches successives.

Le travail du hacheur consiste simplement à placer dans une gaine et à engager entre des toiles une charge de tabac toujours égale et bien homogène. En quelques jours un ouvrier acquiert ce tour de main. Il doit aussi apprendre à régler le couteau, à remplacer les toiles, à nettoyer et à entretenir le hachoir. (...) Tous [les ouvriers] arrivent très rapidement et sans véritable apprentissage à obtenir une production satisfaisante.

Une fois haché, le tabac est introduit dans un *torréfacteur* où il est brassé et chauffé de manière à mélanger les arômes des diverses espèces et à ramener l'humidité au taux voulu, puis il est refroidi dans un *sécheur mécanique*, et enfin mis en *masses*. Toutes ces opérations n'exigent en fait de main d'oeuvre que les transports.

Le scaferlati est *paqueté* à l'aide d'un *appareil hydraulique* par des équipes de trois femmes. La *vignetteuse* forme des sacs en pliant des feuilles de papier sur des douilles à entonnoir en tôle et elle y colle la vignette. La *peseuse* prépare les pesées de 40, 50, 100 ou 500 grammes en se servant d'une balance spéciale. La *paqueteuse* verse les pesées de tabac dans les entonnoirs, les enfonce à la main dans les douilles et les comprime au moyen de la *presse hydraulique*. Le métier de *vignetteuse* demande une certaine dextérité de main, celui de *peseuse* une attention très soutenue. Le métier de *paqueteuse* enfin est très pénible; l'ouvrière constamment debout doit tasser le tabac à force et jongler pour ainsi dire avec l'entonnoir à douille qui est assez pesant. Une huitaine de jours suffisent pour apprendre chacun de ces trois métiers, mais ce n'est qu'après un entraînement de deux ou trois mois que les ouvrières

acquièrent la précision, la rapidité et l'endurance dont elles sont susceptibles et dont dépend leur productivité normale. (...) Comme les nécessités des services obligent cependant à des mutations, il est utile que chaque ouvrière sache les trois métiers. L'apprentissage total peut, dans ces conditions, être évalué à six mois environ.

Déjà des *paqueteuses mécaniques* confectionnent les sacs et y compriment le tabac automatiquement. La machine est servie par trois ouvrières, deux *peseuses* (...) et une *paqueteuse* qui peut rester assise et n'a en quelque sorte qu'à cueillir les paquets terminés (...) L'apprentissage est plus rapide que dans l'ancien système.

Le poids d'une fraction plus ou moins grande de paquets est vérifié au moyen d'une balance mécanique, puis des hommes emballent le scaferlati dans des tonneaux."

Cigarettes

"Les cigarettes ordinaires sont confectionnées à la machine. Les cigarette dites à la main s'obtiennent au moyen d'une *rouleuse* permettant de rouler quatre cigarettes simultanément. Les cigarettes dites de luxe sont faites à la main en s'aidant d'un petit *moule* spécial.

Le rôle de la *cigaretteuse* travaillant à la machine se borne à entretenir (...) une couche de tabac bien égale et bien homogène et à surveiller le fonctionnement de sa machine. (...) L'apprentissage ne dure pas plus d'un mois. Les *cigaretteuses* travaillant à la rouleuse ont à placer un boudin de tabac dans le pli formé par une toile sans fin fixé à l'appareil. Un simple mouvement de levier permet de disposer ensuite quatre feuilles de papier près du pli contenant le tabac. (...) Le tour de main s'acquiert assez vite, mais ce n'est qu'au bout de deux ou trois mois qu'une ouvrière moyenne atteint son rendement normal.

Les *ninas* sont confectionnées de la même manière; le papier est remplacé par une robe découpée dans une feuille de tabac; les ouvrières ont un travail semblable à celui des *cigaretteuses* et se servent d'un appareil analogue, mais ne permettant de confectionner qu'une seule *nina* à la fois.

Les cigarettes sont mises en *portefeuilles* ou en *bondons* par des ouvrières chargées en même temps de les examiner et de rejeter les défectueuses. C'est là encore une main d'oeuvre facile, mais exigeant un certain entraînement."

Cigars

"Un cigare se compose de trois parties; les *tripes* ou *intérieurs* formés de feuilles simplement écotées ou de rognures; les *sous-capes* ou *enveloppes* consistant en partie de feuilles grossièrement étalées et dans lesquelles on entoure les *tripes*; on obtient ainsi la *poupée* qui habillée d'une *cape* ou *robe* découpée dans une feuille de tabac de belle qualité devient le cigare."[1]

"Suivant les manufactures le travail est plus ou moins divisé; soit [les ouvrières] exécutent toutes les préparations, soit le travail est réparti entre les *écoteuses* et les *étaleuses* ou *robeuses*. L'*écotage* est un travail facile, pas fatigant et ne demandant aucune habileté. Il convient aux ouvrières vieillies, fatiguées, convalescentes ou infirmes.

L'*étalage* des *sous-capes* n'est guère plus difficile mais demande une certaine légèreté de main. Les ouvrières étendent les feuilles sur une jambe en maintenant les extrémités d'une part entre leurs genoux et d'autre part entre leur genou et une table.

Le *robage* est constitué de l'*étalage* et de la *taille* des feuilles pour *robe*. Généralement au bout d'une semaine les *robeuses* connaissent leur métier, mais il leur faut de un mois à six semaines pour terminer leur apprentissage.

Le métier de *cigarière* est difficile; il exige une très grande dextérité de main et ce n'est qu'au bout de trois mois qu'une ouvrière moyenne arrive à faire d'une manière à peu près régulière des cigares satisfaisants. En une année, elle n'atteint que les deux tiers de sa productivité normale. L'apprentissage dure environ deux ans. (...) [Les ouvrières] doivent subir un apprentissage chaque fois qu'elles changent d'atelier; une ouvrière de la confection des cigares à 0.10F doit subir un apprentissage de trois mois environ avant de pouvoir confectionner des cigares à 0.15F avec une habileté équivalente (...).

Le métier de *cigarière* est le plus difficile que présente l'industrie des tabacs. Il nécessite de la part des ouvrières des qualités multiples (...).

Des vérificatrices examinent les cigares un par un, puis ils sont paquetés. Les ouvrières du paquetage placent les cigares dans des sacs qu'elles confectionnent ou dans des coffrets qu'elles garnissent. Les cigares paquetés sont rangés dans des caisses qui sont fermées, clouées et plombées par des emballeurs."[2]

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[1] Claude Réal, Le Tabac et les allumettes, Paris, Doin, 1928, pp. 138-146.

[2] Charles Mannheim, De la condition des ouvriers dans les manufactures de l'État, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, pp. 34-36.

APPENDIX 1.11

The working population in the hat industry in 1911

1911	Hatters and cap makers	Milliners
Working population		
Total:	23 371	65 588
Men:	11 836	250
Women:	11 535	65 338
Workers:		
Total:	18 594	26 343
Men:	9 459	-
Women:	9 135	26 343
Unemployed workers:		
Total:	754	1 715
Men:	460	-
Women:	294	1 715

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Résultats statistiques du recensement général de la population effectué le 5 mars 1911, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1913-1916.

APPENDIX 1.12

Distribution of workers in the production of felt hats

OCCUPATIONS	Men	Women
Fabrication de feutres	407	235
Bastisseurs	19	-
Feutrage	-	38
Semousseurs	27	
Fouleurs	170	34
Approprieurs	188	-
Finissage	26	-
Enformeurs	48	-
Ponceurs	-	11
Garnisseuses	-	303
Casquettiers	-	2
Chauffeur	1	-
Camionneur	1	-
Manoeuvres	41	-
Machinistes	34	-
Autres	16	30

Source: This table has been established according to: Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Salaires et durée du travail dans l'industrie française, Vol. 2, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1894, pp. 474- 483.

APPENDIX 1.13

Description of the making of felt hats

"Les poils destinés au feutre sont coupés, puis sont *sécrétés*, c'est-à-dire brossés avec des solutions de nitrate de mercure pour augmenter leurs propriétés feutrantes et enfin *soufflés* et triés. Les laines sont dessuintées, lavées, épaillées chimiquement pour en permettre la teinture homogène. Une fois préparées, les fibres (poils ou laines) sont soumises à quatre opérations. Le *bastissage*, autrefois pratiqué à la main et obtenu aujourd'hui à l'aide de machines américaines, consiste à laver les fibres feutrables, brossées et arçonnées, contre des cônes en laiton perforé ou en toile métallique tournant sur eux mêmes, dans lesquels le vide est formé pour déterminer l'adhésion des fibres qui en prennent la forme et, sous une pluie d'eau bouillante, se réunissent et commencent à adhérer les unes aux autres. Le cône est soumis à des frottements sur une table chaude pour en commencer le feutrage, c'est-à-dire l'opération du *sémoussage*, puis au *caillotage*, opération identique mais faite mécaniquement, et enfin au *foulage* dans les machines dites fouleuses à cône ou dans les fouleuses à rouleaux. C'est alors qu'est formée la *cloche*, cône qui est la réduction renforcée et désormais solide du *bastissage*. La *cloche* est soumise à une machine pour former le fond des chapeaux, à la machine à abattre les bords, au pressage pour faire disparaître les empreintes des outils, et enfin au ponçage qui en égalise les poils.

Selon qu'on veut faire des chapeaux souples ou impers (fermes) on leur fait subir ou non un apprêt à la gomme laque. Les teintures se font généralement en cours de *foulage*, les eaux chaudes ayant préalablement été saturées de substances tinctoriales. Le *dressage* et la *garniture* ne représentent plus que deux opérations de finissage qui peuvent se faire complètement à la main."[3]

"Le *dressage* et la *mise en tournure* peuvent se faire mécaniquement à l'aide d'un appareil qui se compose d'un bâti solide à la partie supérieure duquel est adaptée une chambre de chauffe recevant un moule qui donnera au chapeau la forme et la tournure requises. Au bâti est adapté un couvre-moule (...) qui finit par obliger toutes les parties de feutre à s'adapter au moule. Cette opération se fait généralement à la main et dépend de l'habileté professionnelle de l'ouvrier et spécialement du *tournurier* qui livre le chapeau dressé. Le chapeau est réputé garni lorsqu'il a reçu les galons qui doivent protéger les bords, le cuir intérieur et la coiffe."[4]

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[3] *"Le tarif général des douanes"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 24 May 1891, p. 4.
[4] *"Le tarif général des douanes"*, L'Ouvrier chapelier, 7 June 1891, p. 4.

APPENDIX 2.1

Report on women and girls in industry and commerce at the 1892 workers' national congress

"Le Congrès, considérant par des raisons morales et sociales que la place de la femme est au foyer et non à l'atelier;

Considérant que dans la situation actuelle créée par la classe capitaliste, la femme et l'enfant sont mis en concurrence dans différents métiers avec l'homme;

Décide que les plus grands efforts devront être faits par toutes les corporations ouvrières pour faire cesser un pareil état de choses;

Que la femme, momentanément, ne devra être admise dans l'industrie qu'à salaire égal pour travail égal et tout autant que les professions dans lesquelles on veut l'employer ne seront ni insalubres, ni contraires à ses aptitudes;

Que le maximum de la journée du travail soit fixé à 8 heures pour les femmes au-dessus de 18 ans et à 6 heures pour les enfants au-dessous de 14 ans, avec un repos de deux heures pour le repas de midi et avec droit au moins à un jour de repos par semaine;

Que le travail de nuit et les veilles sont interdits;

Que les ateliers, usines, ouvroirs et tous autres locaux dans lesquels la femme et les filles mineures travaillent devront être régulièrement visités par des inspecteurs ouvriers élus directement par les syndicats ouvriers de la ville et payés par l'état, et que toute infraction, soit à la réglementation du travail, soit aux conditions hygiéniques des ateliers, soit passible de peines correctionnelles;

Que le travail soit interdit pendant six semaines avant et six semaines après les couches avec indemnité des journées de travail par la commune;

Que le travail confié dans les ouvroirs, couvents et prisons soit payé dans les mêmes conditions que le travail civil, ce qui rétablira l'équilibre dans le commerce et l'industrie;

Qu'en matière d'accidents la responsabilité entière incombe aux patrons et directeurs d'industrie;

D'autre part, le Congrès, au point de vue électoral, demande que la femme, sans distinction de nationalité, soit électeur et éligible en matière de prud'homie et d'inspection des ateliers;

Décide en outre que les enfants de veuves, les vieillards et les invalides du travail soient mis à la charge de la société".

Source: Cinquième congrès national des syndicats et groupes corporatifs de France, tenu à Marseille du 19 au 22 octobre 1892, Paris, Rivière, 1909, pp. 55-56.

APPENDIX 2.2

Proposals made at the 1898 CGT congress

"Que pour la femme, veuve ou fille, obligée, par conséquent, de subvenir à ses besoins, il soit entendu que la formule: travail égal, salaire égal, lui sera appliquée;

Qu'une active surveillance des industries insalubres et dangereuses ait lieu;

Empêcher l'homme d'accaparer les travaux et les emplois appartenant à la femme, et réciproquement, empêcher également la femme d'enlever à l'homme le travail lui incombant naturellement;

Supprimer le travail industriel dans les ouvroirs, couvents et prisons;

Empêcher, par tous les moyens possibles, le travail de la femme dans certaines professions, telles, par exemple, que bonnes de café, de brasserie etc., qui sont une cause de démoralisation empêchant l'émancipation féminine;

Qu'une active propagande soit faite pour arriver à grouper les femmes dans leurs diverses branches d'industries respectives;

Que la loi de 1892 sur le travail des femmes dans l'industrie soit rigoureusement appliquée aux employées, et qu'une inspection très sévère des ateliers et magasins ait lieu constamment; que les employées de magasin puissent s'asseoir quand le travail le leur permettra;

Enfin, l'application de la journée de huit heures avec repos hebdomadaire à toutes les ouvrières et employées".

Source: Dixième congrès national corporatif, tenu à Rennes, les 26, 27, 28, 29 et 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898. Compre rendu des travaux du congrès, Rennes, Imprimerie des Arts et Manufactures, 1898, pp 313-314.

APPENDIX 2.3

Decisions taken at the 1900 CGT congress

"Application des lois de protection à tous les travailleurs des deux sexes sans exception;

Restreindre, sinon supprimer, la faculté accordée à la plupart des patrons de faire travailler les femmes et les enfants douze heures par jour pendant soixante jours par an et plusieurs journées du dimanche;

Surveillance rigoureuse des ateliers et usines, afin que les conditions d'hygiène y soient sérieusement appliquées;

Suppression complète du travail de la femme dans les industries considérées comme dangereuses à la santé, à l'enfantement etc.;

Suppression du travail dans les prisons ou maisons de détention;

En attendant la suppression et la disparition complète des couvents, surveillance active de ces maisons de correction qui, en prenant le travail à des conditions désastreuses, provoquent l'abaissement des salaires féminins et privent de travail les ouvrières des villes;

Propagande incessante afin d'arriver au résultat que nous cherchons, c'est-à-dire que lorsque la femme sera employée dans l'industrie à travail égal, elle devra obtenir un salaire égal;

Protection intégrale de la femme et de l'enfant au point de vue physique et moral".

Source: Onzième congrès national corporatif, tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Paris, les 10, 11, 12, 13 et 14 septembre 1900. Compte rendu des travaux du congrès, Paris, Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900, p. 180.

APPENDIX 2.4

Unions and members belonging to the tobacco workers' and hatters' national federations

YEARS	Tobacco Workers			Hatters		
	Unions	Members	Women	Unions	Members	Women
1890	-	-	-	68	-	-
1891	10	4 123	-	68	-	-
1892	20	11 094	-	36	-	-
1893	24	-	-	36	-	-
1894	25	-	-	36	-	-
1895	25	11 127	-	28	1 601	-
1896	25	11 127	-	28	1 601	-
1897	25	11 127	-	28	1 601	-
1898-1899	21	10 136	-	23	1 012	-
1900	21	9 817	-	23	800	12 (1.50%)
1901	21	9 540	-	28	1 477	99 (6.70%)
1902	21	9 817	-	27	1 285	104 (8.09%)
1903	21	9 817	-	31	3 113	619 (19.88%)
1904-1905	23	10 610	-	27	2 660	-
1908-1909	24	10 691	-	25	2 796	-
1910-1911	24	10 691	-	24	3 030	-
1912	24	10 691	-	40	4 980	-
1914	34	13 118	-	40	4 980	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriel, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1890-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1890-1914.

Notes: When possible, the number and proportion of women have been determined according to the list of unions included in the federations and the figures given for every union.
The unions whose membership rate was unknown have been ignored.
It must be borne in mind that some unions were not mentioned in the departmental list. The fact that they may have contained women must be envisaged, but it has been obviously impossible to take them into account in the calculation. The figures given must therefore be taken as a minimum.
The number of women in unions started to be indicated in 1900 and unions belonging to the federation stopped being listed in 1903. That is why the calculation was made possible only from 1900 to 1903, and only for hatters. As for tobacco workers, the Annuaire only mentioned the place where there was a federate union. As there was more than one union per tobacco factory in most cases, it has been impossible to determine which one belonged to the federation. So the calculation could not be made using the departmental list.

APPENDIX 2.5

Unions and membership in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Unions	Members	Workers in the industry[1]	Workers per union	Proportion of unionised workers
1890	11	4 290	18 406	390	23.30%
1891	17	9 638	-	567	-
1892	23	12 736	-	554	-
1893	25	12 744	-	510	-
1894	25	11 567	-	463	-
1895	26	11 848	15 710	456	75.41%
1896	26	11 870	13 717	457	86.53%
1897	27	10 584	-	392	-
1898-1899	28	11 039	-	394	-
1900	29	12 189	17 365	420	70.19%
1901	33	13 127	16 059	398	81.74%
1902	36	13 056	-	363	-
1903	40	13 799	-	345	-
1904-1905	41	11 684	15 584	285	74.97%
1908-1909	41	14 071	-	343	-
1910-1911	42	12 357	-	294	-
1912	39	12 550	-	322	-
1914	37	15 607	-	421	-

[1] See appendices 1.6 to 1.9.

Sources: This table has been established according to:
From 1890 to 1897: Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1899, pp. 552-553.
From 1898 to 1914: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriel, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1898-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1898-1914.

APPENDIX 2.6

Unions and membership in the hat industry

YEARS	Unions	Members	Workers in the industry[1]	Workers per union	Proportion of unionised workers
1890	54	3 747	-	69	-
1891	56	4 016	-	72	-
1892	61	5 078	-	83	-
1893	57	4 816	-	84	-
1894	58	4 154	-	72	-
1895	53	2 709	-	51	-
1896	53	3 038	33 124	57	9.17%
1897	47	2 686	-	57	-
1899	42	1 899	-	45	-
1900	39	1 621	-	42	-
1901	45	2 525	44 249	56	5.70%
1902	45	2 484	-	55	-
1903	44	3 937	-	89	-
1905	46	4 060	-	88	-
1909	43	3 981	-	93	-
1911	39	5 319	44 937	136	11.83%
1912	36	5 167	-	144	-
1914	40	6 310	-	158	-

[1] See appendices 1.7 to 1.9 and 1.11.

Sources: This table has been established according to:
From 1890 to 1897: Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 2, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1901, pp. 470-471.
From 1898 to 1914: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriel, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1898-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1898-1914.

APPENDIX 3.1

Women in workers' unions

YEAR	Workers' unions	Members	Female members	Proportion of female members	Women (and men) per union
1 900	2 685	492 647	30 975	6.28%	11.5 (171.9)
1901	3 287	588 832	32 065	5.44%	9.75 (169.3)
1902	3 679	614 173	42 874	6.98%	11.65 (155.2)
1903	3 934	643 757	43 720	6.79%	11.11 (152.5)
1904	4 227	715 576	59 708	8.34%	14.12 (155.1)
1 905	4 625	781 344	69 405	8.88%	15 (153.9)
1906	4 857	836 134	-	-	-
1907	5 322	896 012	-	-	-
1908	5 524	957 102	88 906	9.28%	16 (157.1)
1909	5 354	944 761	-	-	-
1910	5 360	977 350	-	-	-
1 911	5 325	1 029 238	101 049	9.81%	18.97 (174.3)
1912	5 217	1 064 413	92 335	8.67%	17.69 (186.3)
1913	5 046	1 027 059	-	-	-
1 914	4 846	1 026 302	89 364	8.70%	18.44 (193.3)

Sources: This table has been established according to:
Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914, pp. xxxii, xxxiii.
Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes et l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, p. 29.

APPENDIX 3.2

Membership in the tobacco workers' federation

YEARS	Men	Women	Proportion of women	Total
1891	844	7 797	90.23%	8 641
1892	1 131	9 409	89.26%	10 540
1893	1 003	8 574	89.52%	9 577
1894	912	8 226	90.01%	9 138
1895	758	7 955	91.30%	8 713
1896	899	7 767	89.62%	8 666
1897	965	8 033	89.27%	8 998

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1., Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1899, p. 627.

APPENDIX 3.3

Female membership in tobacco workers' unions

YEARS	Unions	Members	Women	Proportion of women
1900	29	12 189	11 180	91.72%
1901	33	13 127	10 827	82.47%
1902	36	13 056	11 804	90.41%
1903	40	13 799	12 402	89.87%
1905	41	11 684	11 524	98.63%
1909	41	14 071	11 559	82.14%
1911	42	12 357	9 719	78.65%
1912	39	12 550	10 644	84.81%
1914	37	15 607	13 693	87.73%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

Note: The data given in the Annuaire des syndicats were not regular from one year to another. The membership of some unions was omitted on several occasions. As it was difficult to distinguish between the unions that had disappeared and those whose membership had not been reported, it was decided to take into account only the unions whose membership was given on a regular basis. Therefore, the figures given in this table do not represent all the unions mentioned in the Annuaire, but only those on which enough information was given. For this reason, the figures related to women must be taken as a minimum as women's membership was not always mentioned.

APPENDIX 3.4

Female Membership in hatters', cap makers' and milliners' unions

YEARS	Unions	Members	Women	Proportion of women
1900	39	1 621	37	2.28%
1901	45	2 525	291	11.52%
1902	45	2 484	378	15.21%
1903	44	3 937	867	22.02%
1905	46	4 060	981	24.16%
1909	43	3 981	882	22.15%
1911	39	5 319	791	14.87%
1912	36	5 167	1 427	27.61%
1914	40	6 310	1 757	27.84%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.5

Categories of unions between 1900 and 1914

1 - Unions with a title such as *"Syndicat des ouvriers"* from which women were absent
TOBACCO WORKERS: 12 out of 57 unions
HATTERS: 40 out of 71 unions

2 - Unions with an ambiguous title which did not contain any women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 1
HATTERS: 0

3 - Unions with an ambiguous title which contained women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 3
HATTERS: 4

4 - Unions which progressively included women in their title
TOBACCO WORKERS: 1
HATTERS: 1

5 - Unions with a generic title, including women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 4
HATTERS: 6

6 - Unions with a title such as *"Syndicats des ouvriers et ouvrières"* which did not contain any women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 0
HATTERS: 3

7 - Unions with the same kind of title which contained women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 26
HATTERS: 15

8 - Unions with a title indicating that they contained only women
TOBACCO WORKERS: 7
HATTERS: 2

9 - Unions which progressively included men
TOBACCO WORKERS: 1
HATTERS: 0

10 - Unions which passed from mixed to female
TOBACCO WORKERS: 2
HATTERS: 0

Source: These categories have been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.6

Male, mixed and female unions in the tobacco and hat industries between 1900 and 1914

UNIONS	Male[1]	Mixed[2]	Female[3]
Tobacco Workers	13 (22.80%)	37 (64.91%)	7 (12.28%)
Hatters	43 (60.56%)	26 (36.61%)	2 (2.81%)

[1] Unions which never contained any women

[2] Unions which always or progressively included women

[3] Unions which never included any men

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.7

Women in mixed and female unions in the tobacco industry between 1900 and 1914

YEARS	Mixed unions[1]	Members in mixed unions	Women in mixed unions	Proportion of women in mixed unions	Female unions	Members in female unions
1900	17	9 280	8 520	91.81%	7	2 660
1901	16	9 542	8 008	83.92%	8	2 819
1902	17	9 803	9 061	92.43%	8	2 743
1903	21	10 502	9 612	91.52%	9	2 790
1905	24	10 266	9 159	89.21%	9	2 365
1909	28	11 168	9 172	82.12%	7	2 387
1911	26	9 260	7 784	84.06%	7	1 935
1912	23	10 190	8 729	85.66%	7	1 915
1914	22	12 436	10 973	88.23%	7	2 720

[1] *"Mixed unions"* refers to unions containing women at some stage. It must be borne in mind that the number of women was not always indicated in the Annuaires des syndicats. Therefore these figures must be taken as a minimum.

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.8

Women in mixed and female unions in the hat industry between 1900 and 1914

YEARS	Mixed unions[1]	Members in mixed unions	Women in mixed unions	Proportion of women in mixed unions	Female unions	Members in female unions
1900	3	274	37	13.50%	0	-
1901	5	582	161	27.66%	1	130
1902	4	603	166	27.52%	2	212
1903	7	2 358	659	27.94%	2	208
1905	6	2 284	765	33.49%	2	216
1909	8	2 366	749	31.65%	2	133
1911	8	4 148	668	16.10%	2	123
1912	8	4 143	1 334	32.19%	2	93
1914	15	5 319	1 668	31.35%	2	89

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.9

Proportion of women belonging to female unions as opposed to mixed unions

YEARS	Tobacco Workers	Hatters
1900	23.79%	-
1901	26.03%	44.67%
1902	23.23%	56.08%
1903	22.49%	21.20%
1905	20.52%	22.01%
1909	20.65%	15.07%
1911	19.90%	15.54%
1912	17.99%	6.51%
1914	19.86%	5.06%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, industriels, commerciaux et agricoles, déclarés conformément à la loi du 21 mars 1884 (1900-1914), Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 3.10

Proportion of women in tobacco workers' national congresses

YEARS	Number of unions represented	Number of delegates[1]	Number of women delegates	Proportion of women delegates	Proportion of women in the federation
1891	14	26	13	50%	90.23%
1892	20	33	14	42.42%	89.26%
1894	21	30	12	40%	90.01%
1910	-	47	17	36.17%	-
1911	-	40	16	40%	-
1913	-	49	24	48.97%	-

[1]Excluding the members of the Central Committee of the federation.

Sources: This table has been established according to:
Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes dans l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, pp. 93-99.
Office du travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, Vol. 1., Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1899, p. 627.

APPENDIX 3.11

Proportion of women in hatters' national congresses

YEARS	Number of unions represented	Number of delegates	Number of women	Proportion of women
1889	25	26	3	11.53%
1892	22	22	3	13.63%
1895	15	19	2	10.52%
1898	16	14	0	0%
1900	12	-	0	0%
1903	17	12	0	0%
1906	14	13	0	0%
1909	24	17	0	0%
1912	26	19	1	5.26%

Source: This table has been established according to: Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes dans l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, pp. 66-71.

APPENDIX 4.1

Number of strikes in the tobacco and hat industries

YEARS	Tobacco industry	Hat industry
1893	1	4
1894	2	5
1895	1	3
1896	0	9
1897	1	2
1898	1	1
1899	5	4
1900	3	6
1901	2	7
1902	9	7
1903	1	3
1904	4	1
1905	9	5
1906	4	13
1907	2	4
1908	3	6
1909	0	7
1910	2	7
1911	2	8
1912	1	13
1913	0	13
1914	2	5
TOTAL	55	133

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.2

Number of strikers in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Number of strikers
1893	780
1894	501
1895	305
1896	0
1897	460
1898	868
1899	2 994
1900	2 196
1901	635
1902	14 872
1903	19
1904	2 086
1905	1 086
1906	939
1907	1 850
1908	125
1909	0
1910	59
1911	159
1912	50
1913	0
1914	1 610
TOTAL	31 594

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.3

Number of strikers in the hat industry

YEARS	Number of strikers
1893	117
1894	766
1895	56
1896	399
1897	77
1898	40
1899	49
1900	291
1901	856
1902	742
1903	328
1904	44
1905	333
1906	551
1907	115
1908	639
1909	1 062
1910	1 095
1911	176
1912	861
1913	996
1914	65
TOTAL	9 658

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.4

Average number of strikers per strike

YEARS	General	Tobacco Industry	Hat Industry
1893	268.3	780	29.3
1894	139.5	250.5	153.2
1895	113	305	18.7
1896	100.5	0	44.3
1897	193.4	460	38.5
1898	223	868	40
1899	238.9	598	12.3
1900	246.9	732	48.5
1901	213	317.5	122.3
1902	415.3	1 652.4	106
1903	217.9	19	109.3
1904	264.2	521.5	44
1905	214	120.7	66.6
1906	334.9	234.8	42.4
1907	155.2	925	28.8
1908	92.3	41.7	105.8
1909	163.4	0	151.7
1910	187.3	29.5	156.4
1911	156.7	79.5	22
1912	239.8	50	66.2
1913	205.4	0	76.6
1914	149.6	805	13
TOTAL	209.7	574.4	72.6

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.5

Proportion of strikers in relation to workers employed in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Workers employed	Strikers	Proportion of strikers
1895	400	305	76.25%
1896	-	-	-
1897	1 035	460	44.48%
1898	1 134	868	76.54%
1899	5 446	2 994	54.97%
1900	3 390	2 196	64.77%
1901	2 000	635	31.75%
1902	22 801	14 872	65.22%
1903	354	19	5.36%
1904	3 110	2 086	57.07%
1905	7 024	1 086	15.46%
1906	2 360	939	39.78%
1907	1 900	1 850	97.36%
1908	1 701	125	7.34%
1909	-	-	-
1910	860	59	6.86%
1911	1 500	159	10.6%
1912	630	50	7.93%
1913	-	-	-
1914	1 610	1 610	100%
TOTAL	57 255	30 313	52.94%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1895-1914.

APPENDIX 4.6

Proportion of strikers in relation to workers employed in the hat industry

YEARS	Workers employed	Strikers	Proportion of strikers
1895	179	56	31.28%
1896	818	399	48.77%
1897	336	77	22.91%
1898	229	40	17.46%
1899	201	49	24.37%
1900[1]	480	291	60.62%
1901	2 915	856	29.36%
1902	867	742	85.58%
1903	478	328	68.61%
1904	70	44	62.85%
1905	499	333	66.73%
1906	793	551	69.48%
1907	334	115	34.43%
1908	1 220	639	52.37%
1909[2]	1 338	1 062	79.37%%
1910	1 231	1 095	88.89%
1911	666	176	26.42%%
1912	927	861	92.88%
1913	2 537	996	39.25%
1914	432	65	15.04%
TOTAL	16 550	8 775	53.02%

[1] The calculations for that year do not include the strike which occurred in Paris between June and September because the Statistiques did not indicate how many people were employed in this factory at the time.

[2] For the same reason as above, the calculations do not include the strike that occurred in Le Bugue between July and August 1909.

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1895-1914.

APPENDIX 4.7

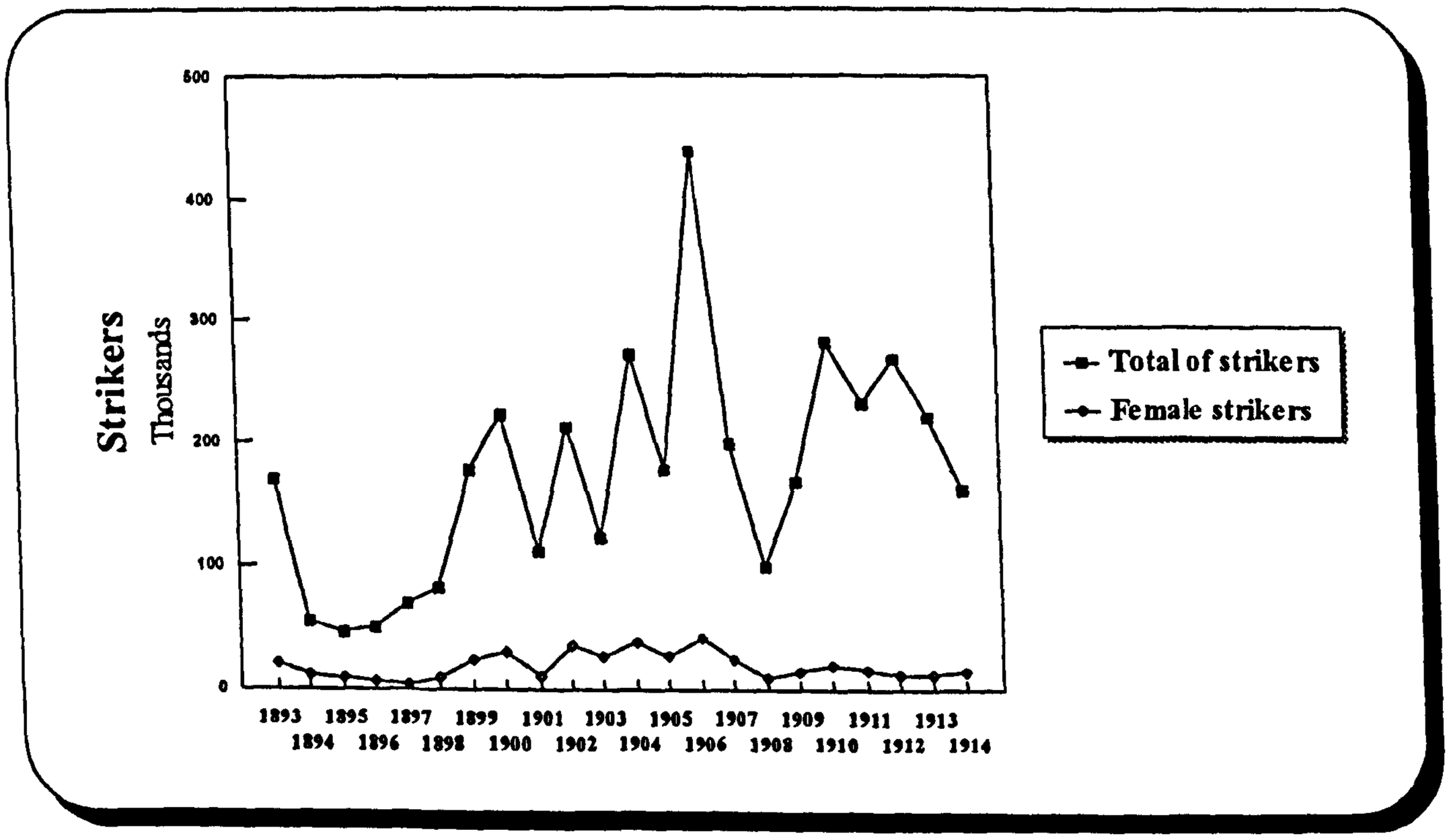
Proportion of women in strikes in general

YEARS	Proportion
1893	12.5%
1894	21.2%
1895	17.8%
1896	12.8%
1897	6.4%
1898	9.7%
1899	12.7%
1900	13.1%
1901	9.5%
1902	15.7%
1903	21.5%

YEARS	Proportion
1904	14.2%
1905	15%
1906	9.2%
1907	11.3%
1908	8.5%
1909	8.6%
1910	6.7%
1911	6.6%
1912	4.2%
1913	5.1%
1914	8.8%

Source: Madeleine Guilbert, Les Femmes dans l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, p. 204

Number of women in strikes in general



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1895-1914.

APPENDIX 4.8

Women in strikes in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Number	Proportion in mixed strikes	Proportion in general
1893	700	89.74%	89.74%
1894	431	84.34%%	86.02%
1895	270	88.52%	88.52%
1896	-	-	-
1897	380	82.60%	82.60%
1898	810	93.31%	93.31%
1899	2 803	93.29%	93.62%
1900	2 016	91.68%	91.80%
1901	631	99.22%	99.37%
1902	13 432	88.06%	90.31%
1903	0	0%	0%
1904	1 893	90.01%	90.74%
1905	888	73.33%	81.76%
1906	804	86.45%	85.62%
1907	1 699	91.83%	91.83%
1908	98	3.57%	78.4%
1909	-	-	-
1910	59	0%	100%
1911	159	0%	100%
1912	50	0%	100%
1913	-	-	-
1914	1 451	90.12%	90.12%
TOTAL	28 574	89.25%	90.44%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.9

Women in strikes in the hat industry

YEARS	Number	Proportion in mixed strikes	Proportion in general
1893	15	0%	12.82%
1894	320	44.44%	41.77%
1895	15	0%	26.78%
1896	133	39%	33.33%
1897	0	0%	0%
1898	0	0%	0%
1899	0	0%	0%
1900	124	47.5%	36.90%
1901	280	64.86%	32.71%
1902	391	58.88%	52.69%
1903	50	20%	15.24%
1904	13	29.54%	29.54%
1905	137	53.93%	41.14%
1906	55	40.90%	9.98%
1907	6	17.64%	5.21%
1908	155	27.82%	24.25%
1909	391	36.89%	36.30%
1910	355	35.85%	32.42%
1911	48	28.14%	27.27%
1912	299	52.73%	34.72%
1913	305	54.81%	30.62%
1914	4	44.44%	6.15%
TOTAL	3 096	43.21%	31.85%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.10

Distribution of women in mixed and female strikes in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Mixed Strikes	Female strikes
1893	100%	0%
1894	87.47%	12.52%
1895	100%	0%
1896	-	-
1897	100%	0%
1898	100%	0%
1899	94.75%	5.24%
1900	98.46%	1.53%
1901	80.98%	19.01%
1902	97.42%	2.57%
1903	0%	0%
1904	80.98%	19.01%
1905	28.49%	71.5%
1906	100%	0%
1907	100%	0%
1908	1.02%	98.97%
1909	-	-
1910	0%	100%
1911	0%	100%
1912	0%	100%
1913	-	-
1914	100%	0%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.11

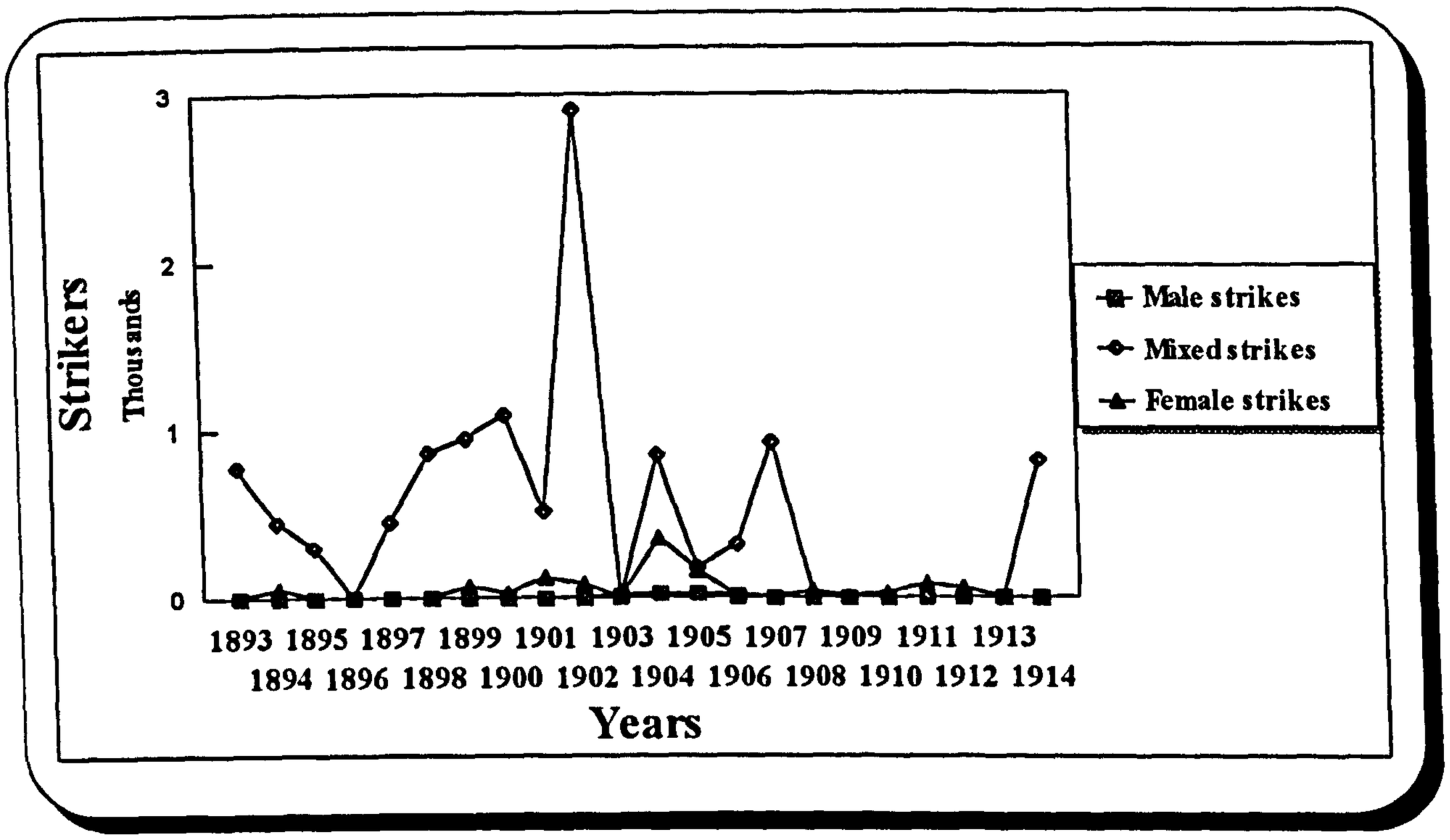
Distribution of women in mixed and female strikes in the hat industry

YEARS	Mixed Strikes	Female strikes
1893	0%	100%
1894	100%	0%
1895	0%	100%
1896	94.73%	5.26%
1897	0%	0%
1898	0%	0%
1899	0%	0%
1900	100%	0%
1901	85.71%	14.28%
1902	100%	0%
1903	100%	0%
1904	100%	0%
1905	100%	0%
1906	49.1%	50.9%
1907	100%	0%
1908	93.54%	6.45%
1909	96.1%	3.83%
1910	100%	0%
1911	79.16%	20.8%
1912	100%	0%
1913	83.93%	16.06%
1914	100%	0%

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

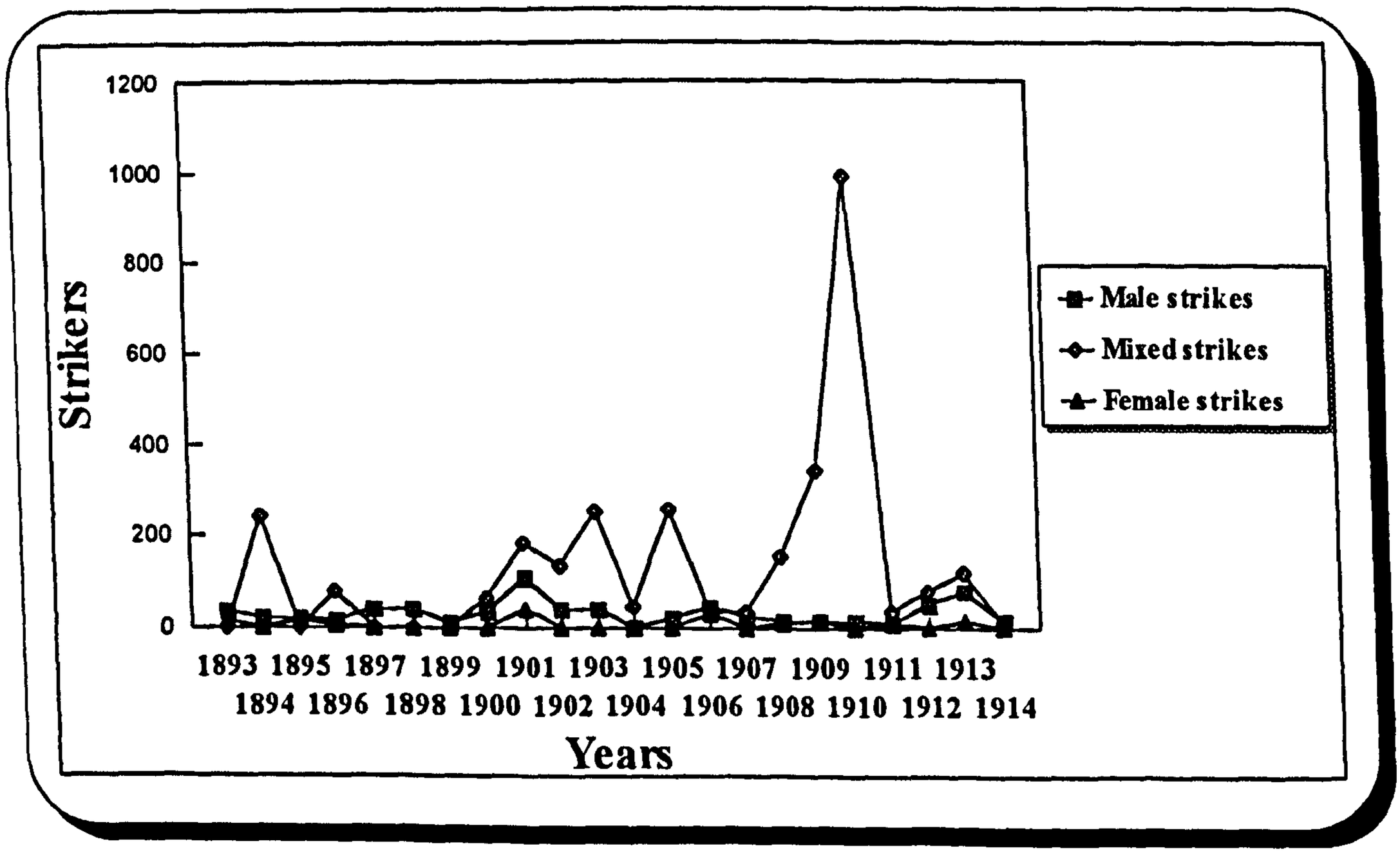
APPENDIX 4.12

Average size of strikes in the tobacco industry



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

Average size of strikes in the hat industry



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.13

Claims in the tobacco industry

CLAIMS	Male strikes	Mixed strikes	Female strikes	Total
Pay increase	3	7	14	24
Solidarity with other tobacco factories	2	19	0	21
Against work regulations and punishments	2	5	3	10
Against the bad quality of raw materials	0	2	6	8
Re-integration of expelled or suspended workers	0	5	1	6
For the sacking of a manager	0	2	0	2
Against pay decrease	0	2	0	2
Mode of promotion	0	2	0	2
For the sacking a supervisor	0	1	0	1
Against the introduction of machines	0	1	0	1
For the right to send delegations	0	1	0	1
Solidarity with other workers from other industries	0	1	0	1
Against the transfer of workers	0	1	0	1

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.14

Claims in the hat industry

CLAIMS	Male strikes	Mixed strikes	Female strikes	Total
Pay increase	35	22	6	63
Re-integration of expelled or suspended workers	12	12	0	24
Against pay decrease	12	6	5	23
Worshop regulations and organisation of work	8	9	0	17
For the sacking of workers	9	4	0	13
For the sacking of a supervisor	3	4	0	7
Against the introduction of machines	1	2	0	3
Reduction of working hours	3	0	0	3
Insurance and contributions	2	1	0	3
Recognition of the union	1	1	0	2
Suppression of piece work	1	1	0	2
Against introduction of piece rate	1	1	0	2
To be paid every two weeks	0	1	0	1
Introduction of piecework	0	1	0	1
Against women apprentices	0	1	0	1
Against the closure of a workshop	0	1	0	1
Working conditions	1	0	0	1
For strikers from another factory to be employed	1	0	0	1
For the employment of unionised workers only	0	1	0	1
Adoption of a new contract	0	1	0	1

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.15

Successes, transactions and failures in the tobacco industry

YEARS	Successes		Transactions		Failures		Unknown
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Proportion
1893	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0%
1894	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0%
1895	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1896	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1897	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0%
1898	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1899	1	20%	4	80%	0	0%	0%
1900	1	33.33%	2	66.66%	0	0%	0%
1901	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0%
1902	5	55.55%	2	22.22%	2	22.22%	0%
1903	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0%
1904	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%	50%
1905	3	33.33%	2	22.22%	4	44.44%	0%
1906	3	75%	0	0%	1	25%	0%
1907	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0%
1908	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	0%
1909	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1910	0	0%	1	50%	1	50%	0%
1911	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%	0%
1912	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1913	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1914	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	0%
TOTAL	**17**	**30.90%**	**21**	**38.18%**	**15**	**27.27%**	**3.63%**

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.16

Successes, transactions and failures in the hat industry

YEARS	Successes		Transactions		Failures		Unknown
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Proportion
1893	1	20%	2	40%	2	40%	0%
1894	2	40%	2	40%	1	20%	0%
1895	1	33.33%	1	33.33%	1	33.33%	0%
1896	3	33.33%	1	11.11%	5	55.55%	0%
1897	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
1898	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0%
1899	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%	0%
1900	2	28.57%	1	14.28	4	57.14%	0%
1901	3	42.85%	3	42.85%	1	14.28%	0%
1902	2	25%	3	37.5%	2	25%	12.5%
1903	2	66.66%	0	0%	1	33.33%	0%
1904	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0%
1905	2	28.57%	2	28.57%	3	42.85%	0%
1906	3	21.42%	4	28.57%	7	50%	0%
1907	1	20%	0	0%	4	80%	0%
1908	3	42.85%	3	42.85%	0	0%	14.28%
1909	5	55.55%	2	22.22%	2	22.22%	0%
1910	2	22.22%	2	22.22%	5	55.55%	0%
1911	3	33.33.5%	1	11.11%	5	55.55%	0%
1912	4	28.57%	1	7.14%	9	64.28%	0%
1913	1	7.69%	5	38.46%	7	53.84%	0%
1914	1	20%	1	20%	3	60%	0%
TOTAL	**45**	**30.61%**	**35**	**23.80%**	**65**	**44.21%**	**1.36%**

Note: In the case of strikes with multiple claims, each claim has been dealt with separately.

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.17

Proportion of successful strikes in the tobacco industry
(Only for strikes for which the outcome is known)

YEARS	Male strikes	Mixed strikes	Female strikes
1893	-	0%	-
1894	-	0%	0%
1895	-	100%	-
1896	-	-	-
1897	-	0%	-
1898	-	100%	-
1899	-	33.33%	0%
1900	-	0%	100%
1901	-	0%	0%
1902	-	80%	25%
1903	0%	-	-
1904	-	0%	0%
1905	0%	0%	75%
1906	0%	100%	-
1907	-	0%	-
1908	-	0%	0%
1909	-	-	-
1910	-	-	0%
1911	-	-	0%
1912	-	-	100%
1913	-	-	-
1914	-	50%	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.18

Proportion of successful strikes in the hat industry
(Only for strikes for which the outcome is known)

YEARS	Male strikes	Mixed strikes	Female strikes
1893	25%	-	0%
1894	50%	33.33%	-
1895	50%	-	0%
1896	0%	75%	0%
1897	100%	-	-
1898	0%	-	-
1899	50%	-	-
1900	33.33%	25%	-
1901	25%	100%	0%
1902	100%	33.33%	-
1903	100%	0%	-
1904	-	0%	-
1905	25%	33.33%	-
1906	27.27%	0%	0%
1907	0%	50%	-
1908	100%	50%	0%
1909	66.66%	60%	0%
1910	33.33%	0%	-
1911	50%	25%	0%
1912	14.28%	42.85%	-
1913	0%	0%	33.33%
1914	25%	0%	-

Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.19

Proportion of success for a pay increase in male, mixed and female strikes

TOBACCO INDUSTRY								
Male			**Mixed**			**Female**		
Strikes	**Successes[1]**	**Proportion**	**Strikes**	**Successes**	**Proportion**	**Strikes**	**Successes**	**Proportion**
3	0	0%	7	0	0%	14	6	42.85%

[1] One result was unknown

HAT INDUSTRY								
Male			**Mixed**			**Female**		
Strikes	**Successes**	**Proportion**	**Strikes**	**Successes**	**Proportion**	**Strikes**	**Successes**	**Proportion**
35	10	28.57%	22	4	18.18%	6	2	33.33%

Source: These two tables have been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.20

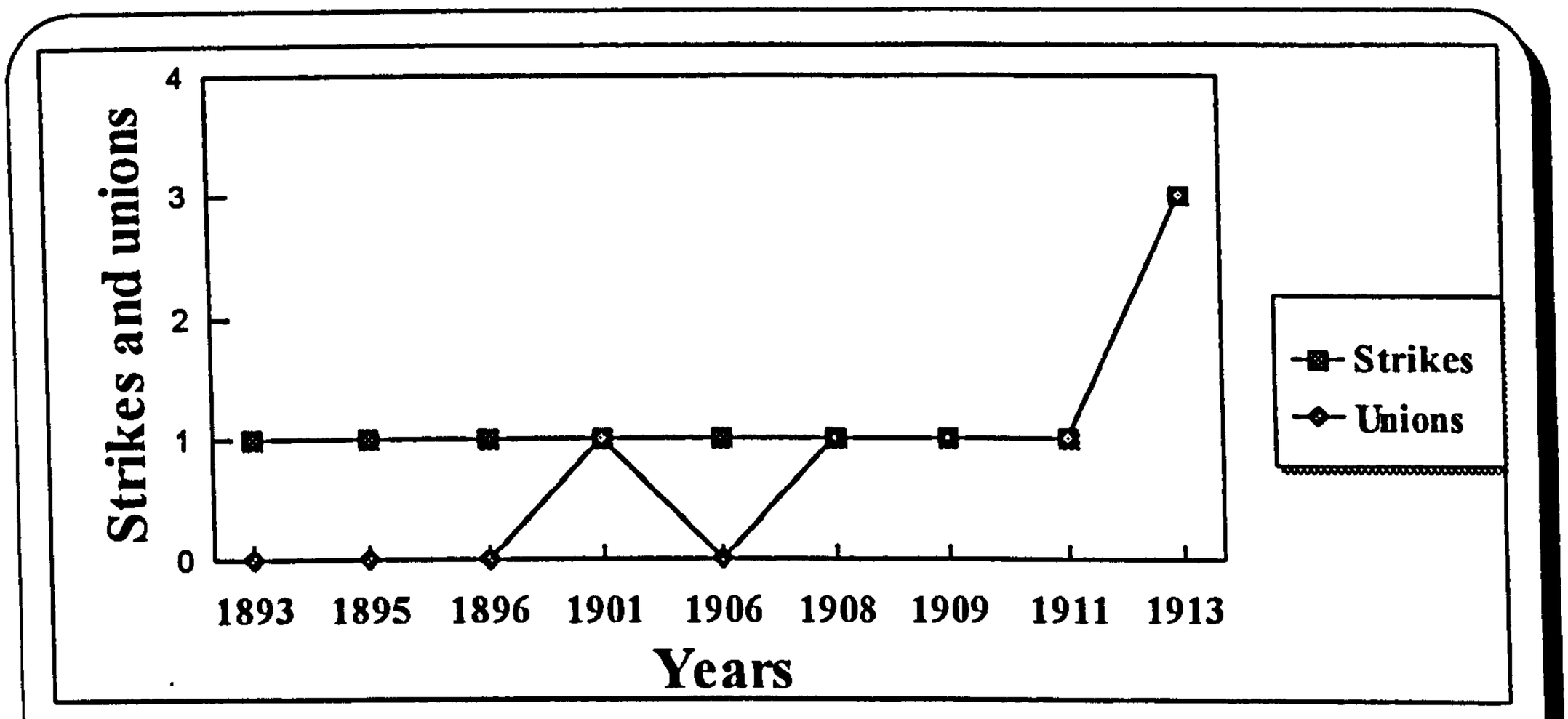
Average duration of strikes

YEARS	Tobacco industry				Hat Industry			
	Male	Mixed	Female	Average	Male	Mixed	Female	Average
1893	-	1	-	1	20	-	0.5	15.1
1894	-	8	4	6	28	61	-	23.4
1895	-	16	-	16	17.5	-	0.5	11.83
1896	-	-	-	-	4	29.75	1	15.1
1897	-	10	-	10	3.5	-	-	3.5
1898	-	0.5	-	0.5	6	-	-	6
1899	-	6	2.75	4.7	6.3	-	-	6.3
1900	-	16	6	12.6	54	46.25	-	48.8
1901	-	2	8	5	13.75	25	1	11.5
1902	-	25	6	7.6	4.12	22.2	-	17
1903	1	-	-	1	3.5	78	-	28.3
1904	3	10	2	6.25	-	34	-	34
1905	3	10	3.67	4.8	21.5	13	-	19.8
1906	2	5.5	-	3.25	21.2	15	1	18.6
1907	-	9.5	-	9.5	17	30	-	20.25
1908	-	2	0.7	1.2	8	5	7	7
1909	-	-	-	-	13	7.33	14	10.71
1910	-	-	6.75	6.75	11.83	252	-	46.1
1911	-	-	0.4	0.4	31.33	3.75	12	15.1
1912	-	-	3	3	25	32	-	28.7
1913	-	-	-	-	8.33	34.5	3.83	15.3
1914	-	1.3	-	1.3	11.75	15	-	12.4
TOTAL	**2.25**	**8.18**	**3.9**	**5.3**	**15.69**	**41.3**	**4.53**	**18.85**

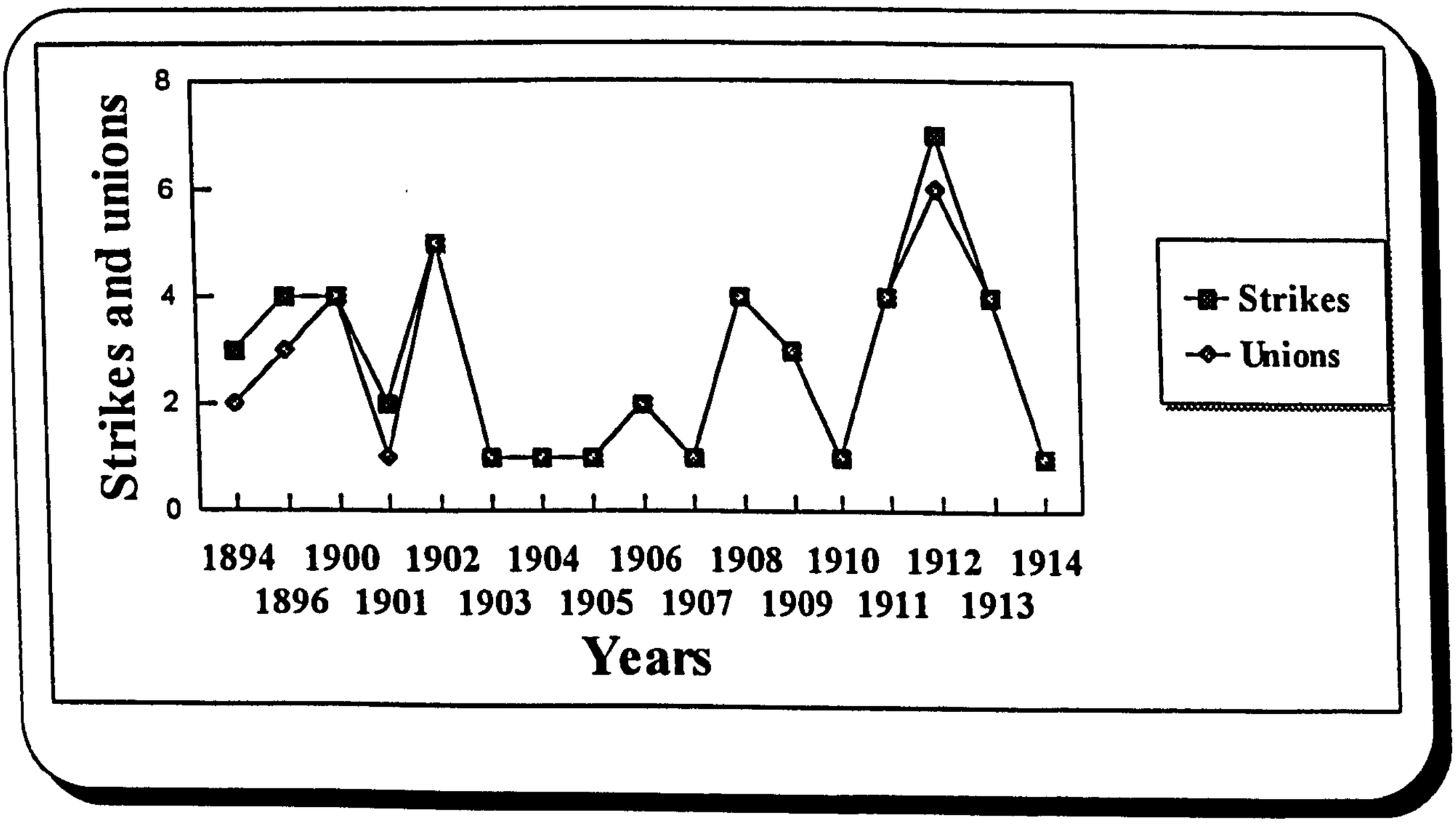
Source: This table has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.21

Ratio of female strikes to the presence of a union in the hat industry



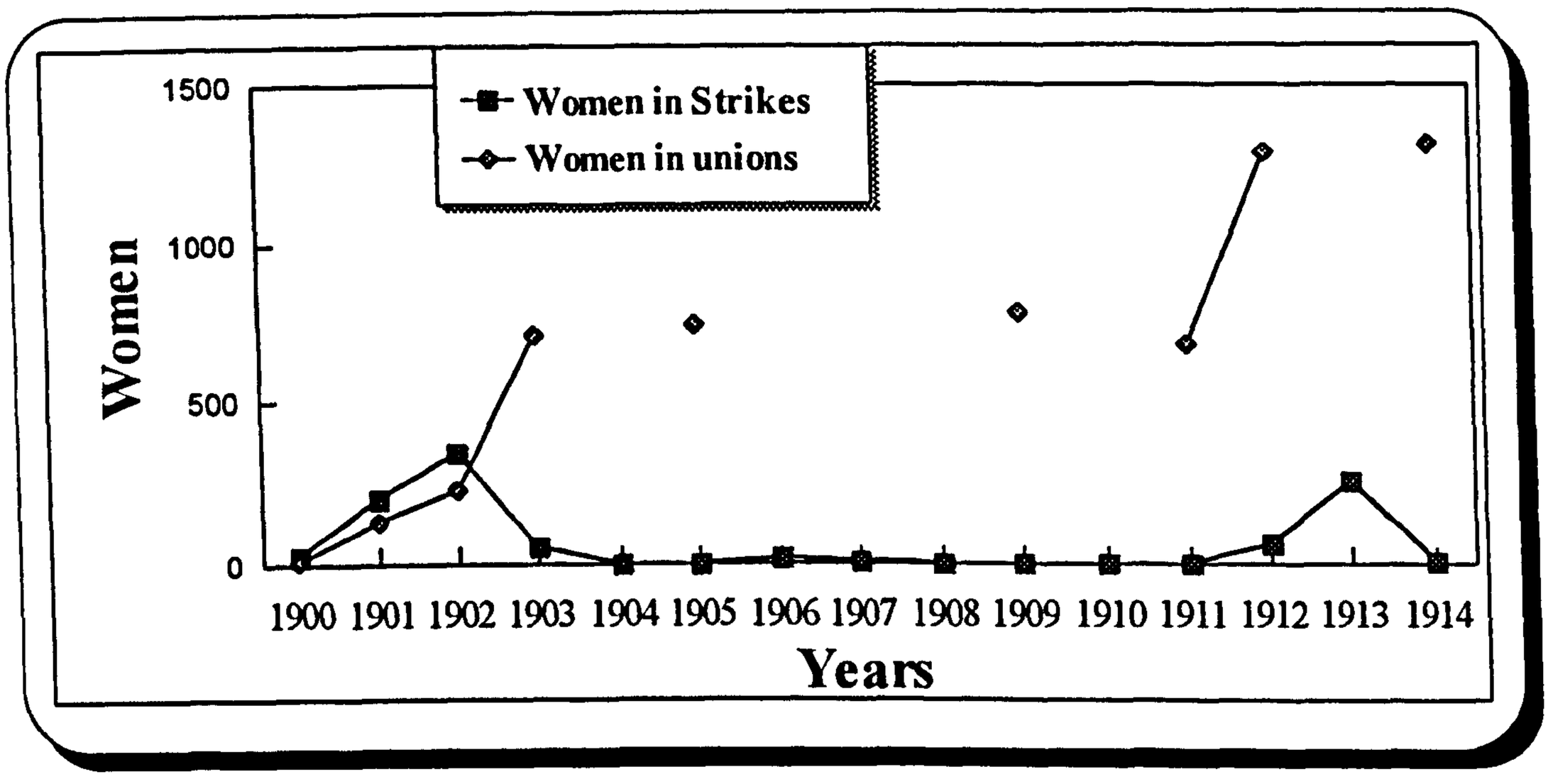
Ratio of mixed strikes to the presence of a union in the hat industry



Source: These two graphs have been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1893-1914.

APPENDIX 4.22

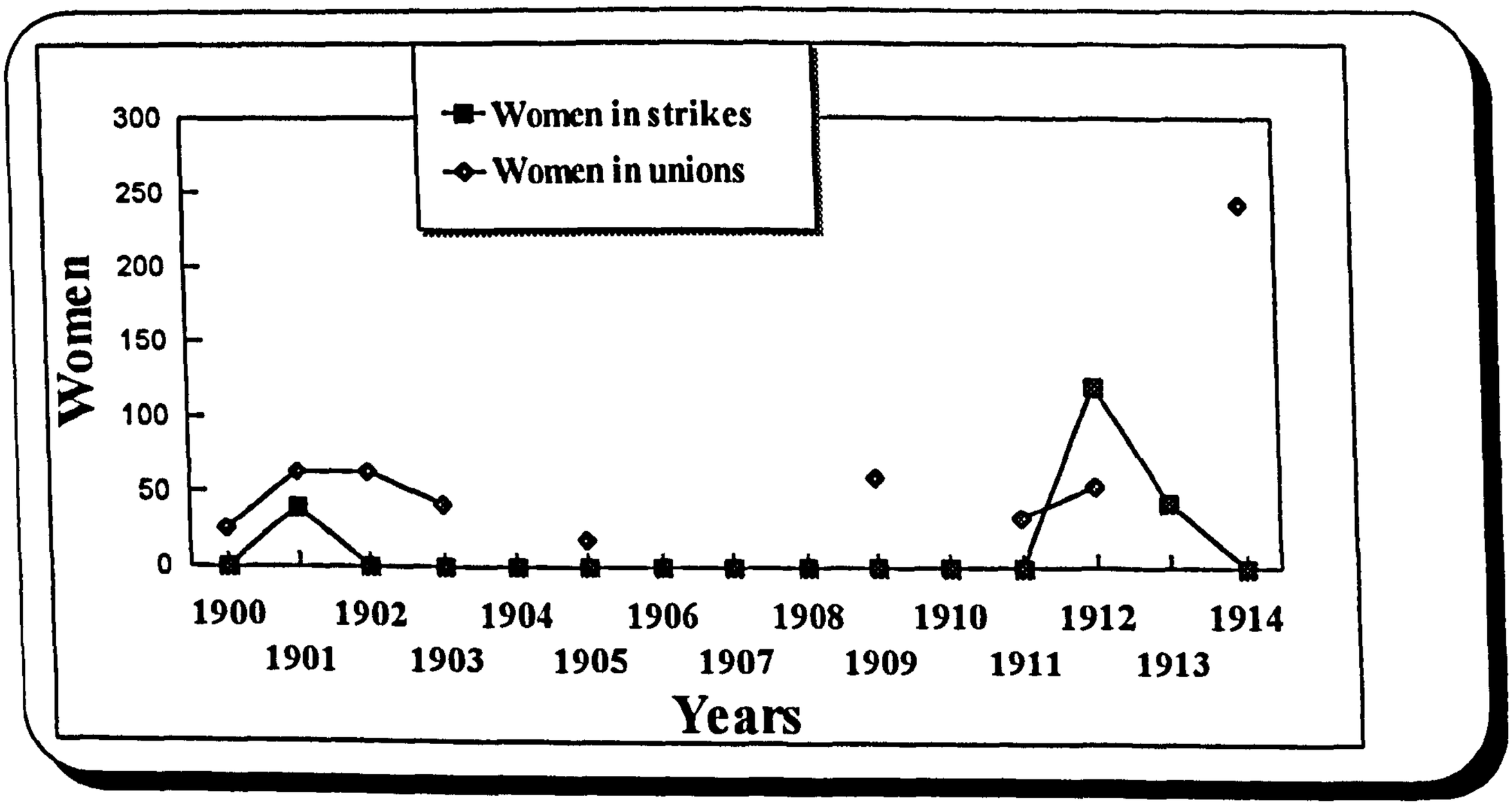
Women in hatters' strikes and unions (Paris)



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 4.23

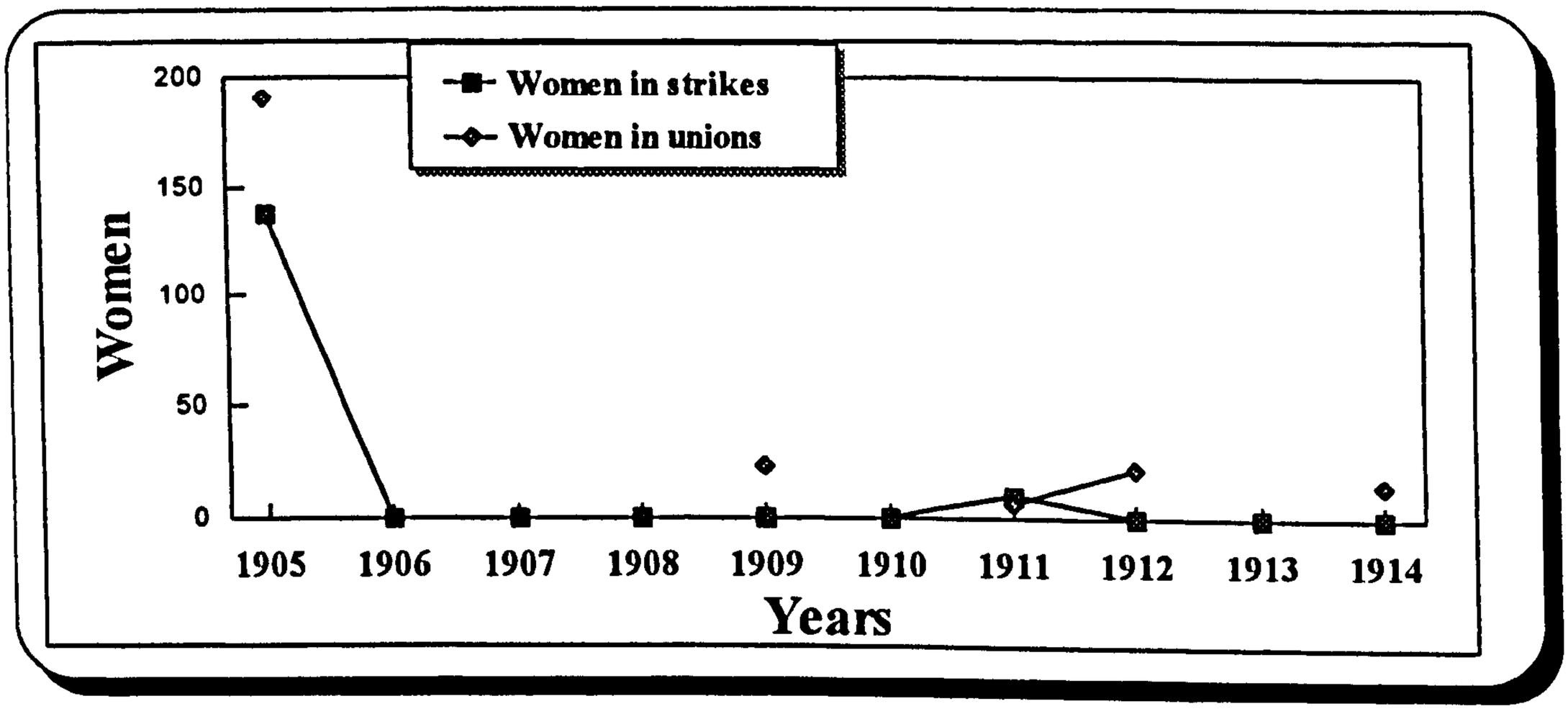
Women in hatters' strikes and unions (Chazelles sur Lyon)



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1900-1914.

APPENDIX 4.24

Women in hatters' strikes and unions (Fontenay-le-Comte)



Source: This graph has been established according to: Office du travail, Statistiques des grèves et des recours à la conciliation et à l'arbitrage, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1905-1914.

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BB18 2192 1037 A01: *"Rapports des procureurs généraux sur les manifestations du 1er mai survenues dans leur ressort".*

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ARTICLES

Preliminary comments:
The issues of the tobacco workers' federative paper L'Écho des tabacs, from September 1895 to April 1914, were examined thoroughly at the *Bibliothèque Nationale, Annexe de Versailles*. The issues of the hatters' federative paper L'Ouvrier chapelier, from January 1890 to August 1914, were examined at the *Institut CGT d'Histoire Sociale*. The great number of articles used in the course of this investigation prevents all these articles from being listed exhaustively in this bibliography. Therefore, referring directly to foot notes for detailed reference is advisable.
A systematic search was also made in L'Humanité, between 1904 and 1914, to gather complementary information on the tobacco workers' congresses during that period. Only articles referring to women in these congresses in particular are listed below. They were consulted at the *Musée Social*.

A systematic search was also undertaken in Le Progrès de Lyon, when gathering information on the 1902 tobacco workers' general strike in Lyon, at the *Archives Départementales du Rhône*. In addition, La Voix du peuple was checked in relation to strikes in the tobacco and hat-making industries between 1900 and 1914. Only articles mentioning the role of women in these strikes are listed below. They were consulted at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*.
Most of the remaining articles listed were selected and examined according to the list of newspaper articles provided by Madeleine Guilbert in her study[1]. They were all consulted at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*.
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[1] Madeleine Guilbert, Les femmes dans l'organisation syndicale avant 1914, Paris, CNRS, 1966, pp. 247-388.

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